MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

JUNE 2008
#301

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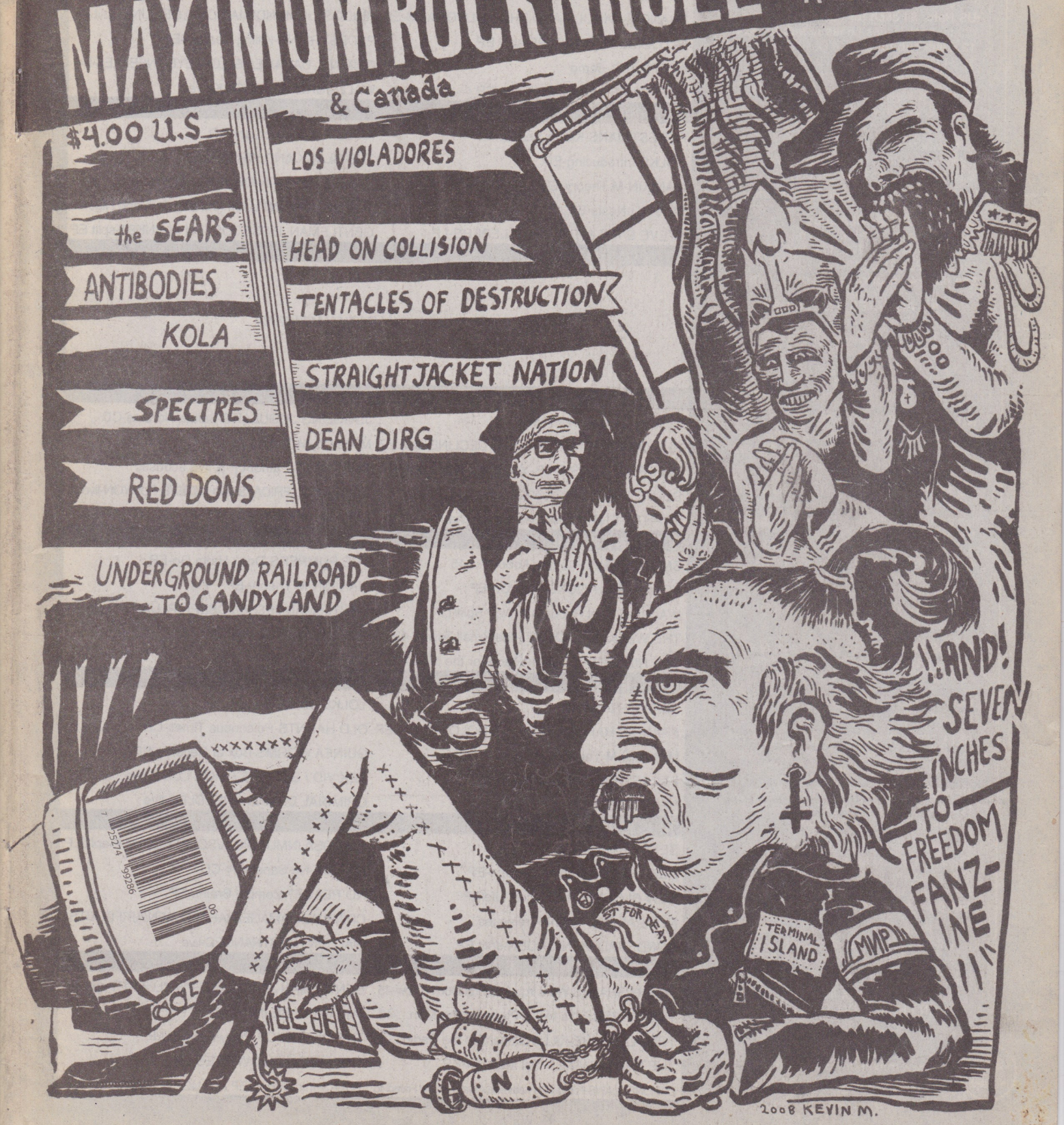

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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- **US Rate: $4 each for current issue.** ($3 for back issues.) **6 issue sub for $24. 12 issue sub for $38.** In California, send $4.34 for single copies, $26.60 for 6 months, or $42.60 for 12 months (tax).
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- Everywhere else: $10 each (air). 12 issue sub for $112 (airmail only). 6 issue sub for $59 (airmail only).

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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
#148, 150-151, 153-154, 156 pts. 1 & 2, 160-163, 166, 172, 175, 179-197, 199-181, 184-210, 214-215, 218-227, 229-300
See page 4 for pricing and other info.

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TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

JUSTIN BRIGGS

- NO PEACE?-Zombie Brains-EP
- FRANCIS HAROLD AND THE HOLOGRAMS-EP
- F.I.D./INSECT WARFARE-split EP
- ACEPHALIX-demo
- DEEP SLEEP-Manic Euphoria-EP
- SEX/VID-Nests-EP
- RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA/SOLID DECLINE-split LP
- PEDESTRIANS-Killing Season-EP
- CRIMINAL DAMAGE/YELLOW EYES/NEEDLES-live
- WALLS/SACRED SHOCK-live

TIM BROOKS

- PEDESTRIANS-Killing Season-EP
- YOLKS-Introducing-EP
- MANIKIN-M Theory-EP
- SEX/VID-Nests-EP
- STEVE E NIX & THE CUTE LEPERS-LP
- AMEBIX-No Sanctuary-CD
- THE BLACK AND WHITES-LP
- CONDENADA/SIN ORDEN-split EP
- THE IMPULSE INT'L-Arm the Girls/Run and Hide-45
- GENTLEMAN JESSE/JOSEPH PLUNKET-split EP

MITCH CARDWELL

ON TOUR WITH HANNAH MONTANA

PAUL CURRAN & ARIEL AWESOME

- NOMEANSNO-0+2=1-2xLP
- RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA/SOLID DECLINE-split LP
- SLEEPWALKERS R.I.P.-Young and Old...-45
- SOLVENT ABUSE-Glue Kills Demos-LP
- CAPITAN ENTRESIJOS-Furia Chicharra-LP
- JUGGLING JUGULARS-Salute No One-CD
- MANIKIN-M Theory-EP
- SHOTWELL-Patriot-LP & live acoustic
- NO SCHOOL FRIDAYS!-live / STEVE FUNYON-live
- DQU Benefit show-live

JONATHAN FLOYD

- SNAKEFLOWER 2-Talk About It...-45
- YOKOHAMA HOOKS-Turn On-EP
- V/A-Small Pool Records 4-Way Split-LP
- THE WEAKENDS-Death Ride/Small Towns-45
- THE RIPPERS-It's Not a Place for the Men-45
- THE PUMPERS-Don't Hafta Go-EP
- MANIKIN-M Theory-EP
- GENTLEMAN JESSE/JOSEPH PLUNKET-split EP
- THE BLACK AND WHITES-LP
- MARKED MEN-live in SF

LAYLA GIBBON

- SEX/VID-Nests-EP
- FRANCIS HAROLD AND THE HOLOGRAMS-EP
- MANIKIN-M Theory-EP
- PEDESTRIANS-Killing Season-EP
- DEEP SLEEP-Manic Euphoria-EP
- YOLKS-Introducing-EP
- OLD HAUNTS-Poisonous Times-CD
- GUINEA WORMS-Box of Records-EP
- SEX/VID / SISTERS / IRON LUNG-live
- CRIMINAL DAMAGE/NEEDLES-live

CHRIS HUBBARD

- SEX/VID-Nests-EP
- DEEP SLEEP-Manic Euphoria-EP
- NEW BLOODS-The Secret Life-LP
- NOMEANSNO-both LP reissues
- CONDENADA/SIN ORDEN-split EP
- RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA/SOLID DECLINE-split LP
- AMEBIX-No Sanctuary-CD
- NO PEACE?-Zombie Brains-EP
- CRIMINAL DAMAGE/MARKED MEN/AIRFIX KITS/
- WALLS/N.N./ESTRANGED-live

KENNY KAOS

- THE HIPSHAKES-Want You Around/I Don't Know-45
- THE RIPPERS-It's Not a Place for the Men...-45
- THE PLEASURE KILLS-Smash Up the Radio...-45
- THE BABY SHAKES-Tell Me Now-EP
- DEMONS CLAWS-Fucked On Ketamine/Always Be My Friend-45
- GENTLEMAN JESSE/JOSEPH PLUNKET-split EP
- THE IMPULSE INT'L-45
- THE OKMONICS-Party Fever!!!-LP
- THE BLACK AND WHITES-LP
- YOLKS-Introducing-EP / DANGERLOVES-Easy-EP

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl or CD-only releases to the address on the previous page. See Demos section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

CAROLYN KEDDY

- CHEAP TIME-CD / THE HIPSHAKES-45
- THE BLACK AND WHITES-LP
- CONTAMINATORS-Minimal Minds-EP
- NECROPOLIS-Song for a Working Man...-45
- FRANCIS HAROLD AND THE HOLOGRAMS-EP
- GUINEA WORMS-EP / YOLKS-EP
- BLANK ITS-Stop! No! Wait!-EP
- V/A-The World's Lousy With Ideas 4-EP
- LOST SOUNDS-Motorcycle Leather Boy...-45
- YOKOHAMA HOOKS-Turn On-EP

RAY LUJAN

- ENDLESS MIKE JAMBOX-CD
- STEVE E NIX AND THE CUTE LEPERS-LP
- THE BABY SHAKES-Tell Me Now-EP
- THE IMPULSE INT'L-Arm the Girls/Run and Hide-45
- NEW BLOODS-The Secret Life-LP
- OLD HAUNTS-Poisonous Times-CD
- THE PLEASURE KILLS-Smash Up the Radio...-45
- DOWN AND AWAY-Reclaim-CD / MANIKIN-EP
- 4 FT. FINGERS-New Beginnings of Old Stories-CD
- MULETRAIN-The Ansar-EP

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- NOMEANSNO-0+2=1-2xLP
- MANIKIN-M Theory-EP
- CONTAMINATORS-Minimal Minds-EP
- GENTLEMAN JESSE/JOSEPH PLUNKET-split EP
- PEDESTRIANS-Killing Season-EP
- THE IMPULSE INT'L-45 / YOLKS-Introducing-EP
- WILD BILLY CHILDISH & THE BLACKHANDS–EP
- SEX/VID-Nests-EP / DANGERLOVES-Easy-EP
- STEVE E NIX AND THE CUTE LEPERS-LP
- NEW BLOODS-The Secret Life-LP

NICK MANGEL

- CONDENADA/SIN ORDEN-split EP
- DISRUPT-LP
- DISCHARGE-War Is Hell-LP
- KAH-ROE-SHI/PAZAHORA-split EP
- SANCTUM-On the Horizon-CD
- STENCH-Cult Status-LP
- WAR/SYSTEM-Incoming!-EP
- WARZONE-Demos-LP
- ACCUSED-Return of Martha-CD
- AMEBIX-No Sanctuary-CD

BRUCE ROEHRS

- WARZONE-Demos-LP / DEEP SLEEP-EP
- NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE-Claustrophobic-EP
- FED UP-Fuck Your Life-CD
- PEDESTRIANS-Killing Season-EP
- SUICIDAL TENDENCIES-1982 Demos-LP
- CLOAK/DAGGER-Kamikazes/She Cracked-45
- THE SKUDS-Annihilation-LP
- HAMMER BROS.-The Vitality-LP
- SACRED SHOCK/WARKRIME-live
- CRIMINAL DAMAGE-live / TRIED AND TRUE-live

CISSIE SCURLOCK

- RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA/SOLID DECLINE-split LP
- MANIKIN-M Theory-EP
- NO PEACE?-Zombie Brains-EP
- SEX/VID-Nests-EP
- FRANCIS HAROLD AND THE HOLOGRAMS-EP
- SLEEPWALKERS R.I.P.-Young and Old...-45
- CONDENADA/SIN ORDEN-split EP
- DEEP SLEEP-Manic Euphoria-EP
- CRIMINAL DAMAGE/NEEDLES/YELLOW EYES-live
- WALLS/SACRED SHOCK/ESTRANGED/NN-live

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA/SOLID DECLINE-split LP
- SUICIDAL TENDENCIES-1982 Demos-LP
- SLEEPWALKERS R.I.P.-Young and Old...-45
- MANIKIN-M Theory-EP
- PEDESTRIANS-Killing Season-EP
- NO PEACE?-Zombie Brains-EP
- CLOAK/DAGGER-Kamikazes/She Cracked-45
- SEX/VID-Nests-EP
- DEEP SLEEP-Manic Euphoria-EP
- SOLVENT ABUSE-Last Salute-LP

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Black Lesbian President?! #4*
- *Cramhole #2*
- *Dog Days - The Summer of Glass #2*
- *Doris #25*
- *Gullible #28*
- *Herpes #3*
- *Proof I Exist #9*
- *Pudd 'n'Head #4*
- *The Trouble with Normal #87*
- *Xploited Zine #2*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11, Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb. This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oi!!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Part One, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Part Two, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

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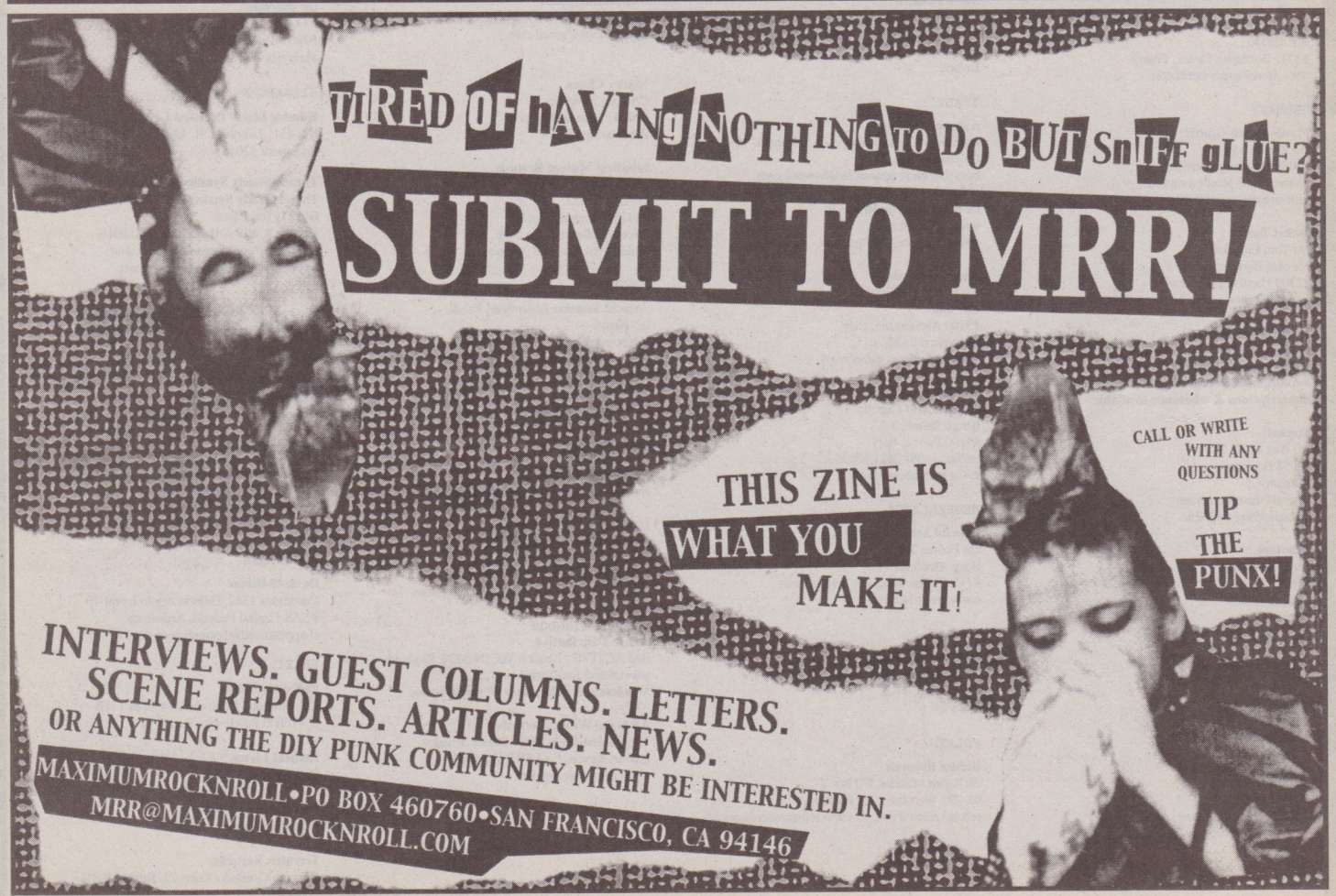


LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

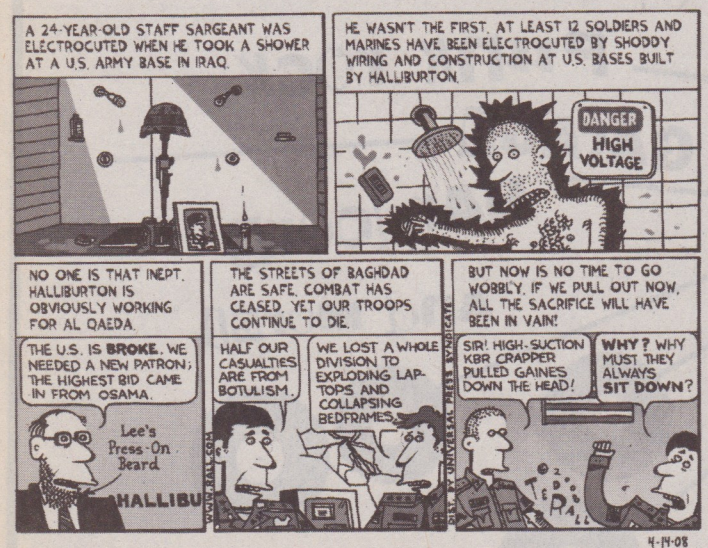
MRR—
This may be the stupidest question ever, but here goes… I got my boyfriend a subscription to your magazine for Christmas. He loves it, but was totally perplexed by the last issue. In fact, he had his friend Todd and I both examine the magazine page-by-page to try and find the cover story. Both Todd and I were equally confused. So, my question is: did the cover story "Ever get the Feeling You've Been Cheated?" really exist in that issue, or was it supposed to be some clever-type of "April Fools Day" irony playing on the quotation? Hopefully, it was an oversight and not high-brow humor. I'm thinking that we just must have overlooked it, since I would hate to think that a costly magazine would play a hoax of this nature on paying customers. Please let me know, it's been driving my boyfriend crazy!
—Debbie

Debbie,
Thanks for bringing this concern to our attention. We will have our people look into this and let you know the result of our findings. I have a sinking feeling that that pesky Noid had a hand in it somehow.
—Justin

Dear MRR—
May I start off with thanking you for the good reviews the Burnt Cross 7"s have been getting in your great zine, and hope to get with future 7"s they may put out. My only problem with the review [in #300] is when you say "limited to 200, so it's probably gone." Please remember A: the £ is very strong against the $, so not a lot of folks outside the UK will pick this up, and B: postage these days is just stupid, so again, people won't just send for just one 7". I did send a few copies to distro's outside the UK, so people that did mail me, I sent to them, but at the time of the review I still have around 50 copies from the 200, which is plenty. And with people not buying records so much these days, since they are not a touring band, and in my experience with my other releases (both 500 pressed—Burning Times 7"s / Constant State of Terror 7"s) people just don't seem so into trading these days with UK labels (which is fair enough with the postage), but it's getting harder and harder to do a label (I'm sure this is the same everywhere) so anyone reading reviews, I would say unless it's the latest Japanese "hype" band, or "cool" band or whatever, maybe mail the label and see. You just never know.
Keep up the good work,
—Darren / Tadpole Records / UK

Hey Punx—
Dood! The April ish' was too Freakin' funny! I loved the cover even more after discovering …well…you know! Ha! The Guided Cradle tour stories were great, as was the layout for the Daily Void interview. Keep up the awesome work! On a slightly more critical note, put me down for an *ixnay* on the metal column, and really, columns in general. Other than ones about the zine it seems like mostly ego-flatulence, but that is one balding old fart's opinion. Thanks again for keeping the zine going.
Cheers!
—Anonymous Punk

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:
In last month's SF/Oakland scene report (#300), I mentioned that the local band World Eater had a new split 7" with Daisy Cutter. As it turns out, both bands on that split are actually from Indiana and not the World Eater from the Bay Area. I should have done better on my homework it seems. That's oops number one. The second thing to correct is that the last part of the Church Police interview got cut off. Here's what it said: "Any guitarists out there want to back an old punk rock singer, let me know. Contact Church Police at churchpolice.blogspot .com." Many apologies, and sorry for any confusion this may have caused.
—Justin



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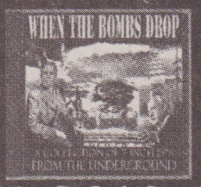

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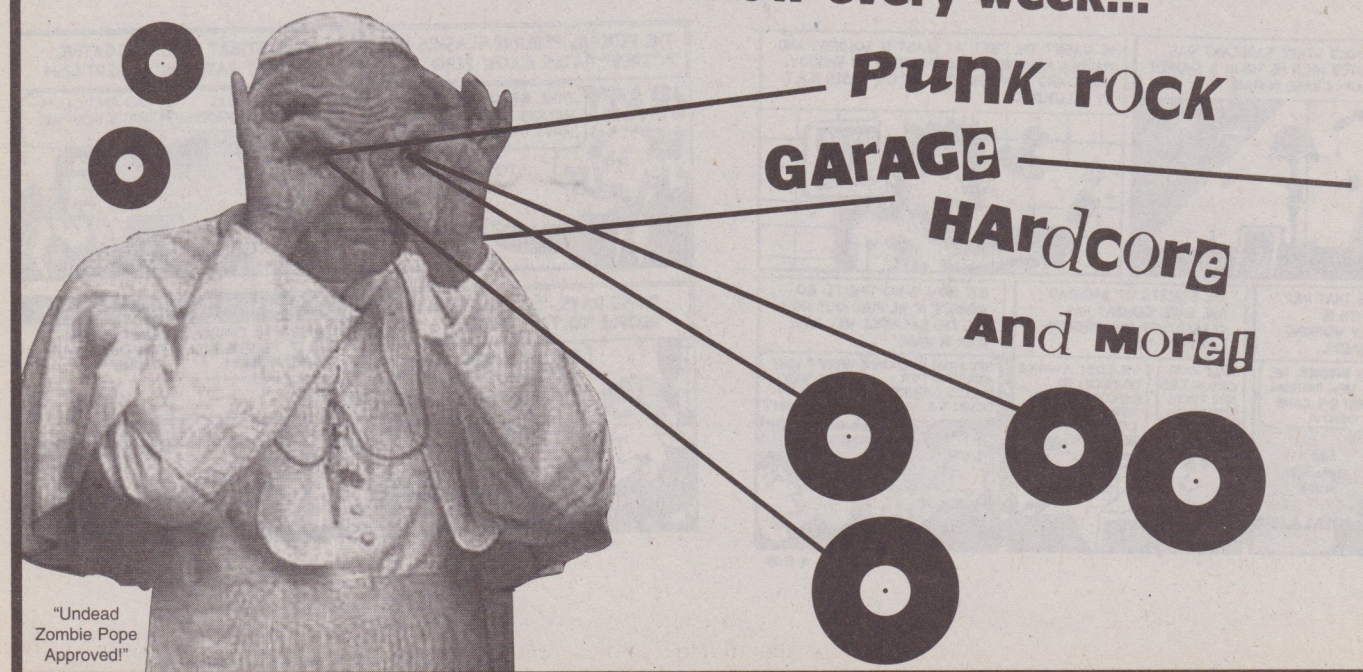

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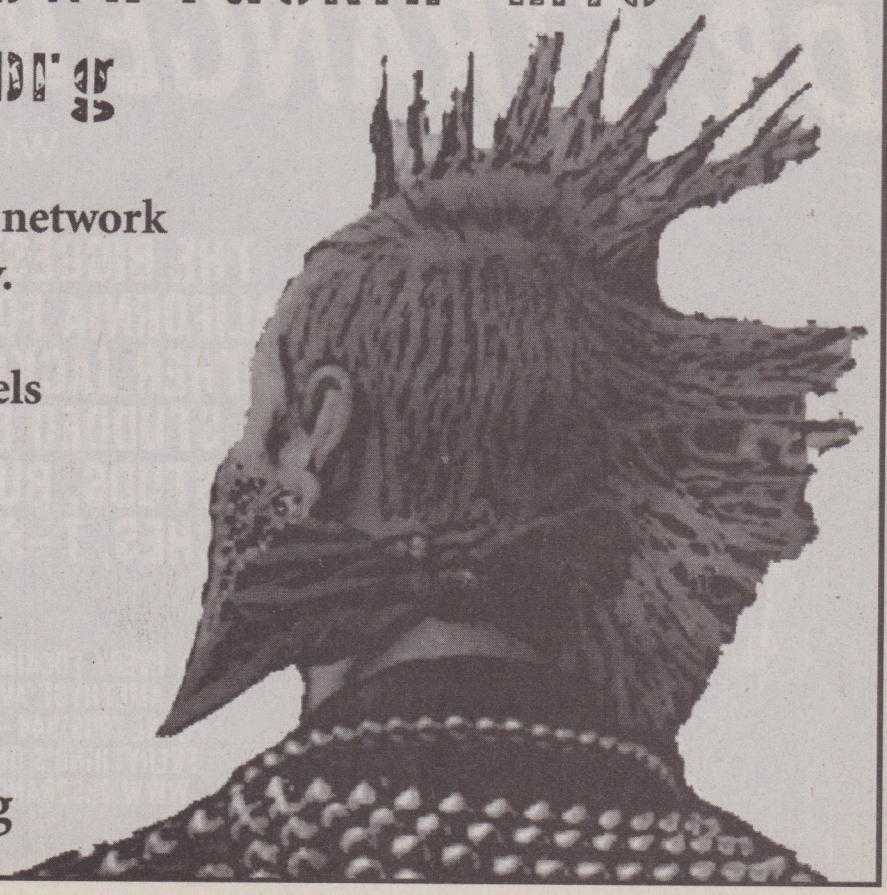

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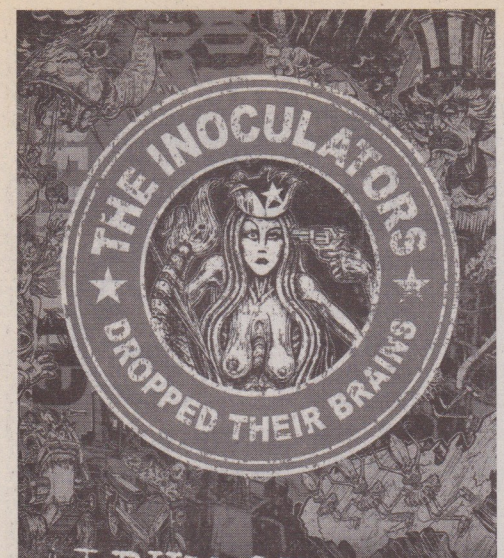

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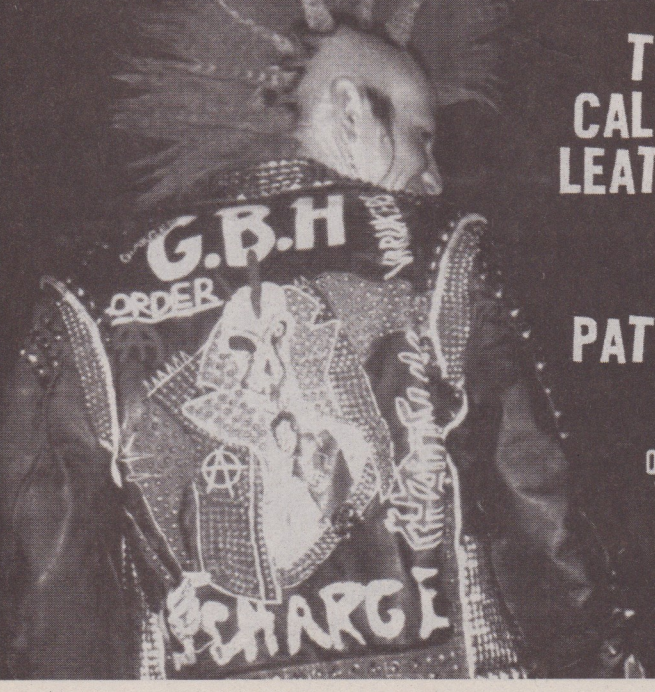

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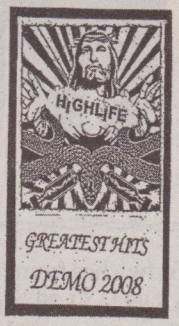

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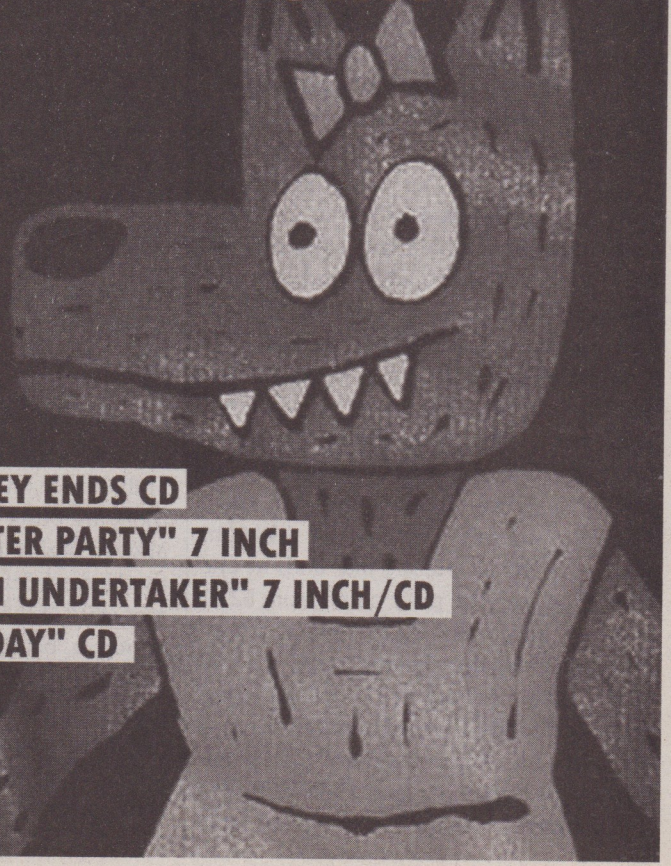

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COLUMNS

Do you get the feeling we're in a recession? I sure as hell do. At the very least, prices for just about everything are going up. Gas is over three dollars a gallon — I'd hate to be a touring band dealing with those gas costs right now and anyone who tries to weasel out of paying for a DIY punk show featuring touring bands is cordially invited to go fuck him/herself. That also goes for people who whine about paying more than a few bucks. These folks usually do said whining with a case or 40 oz of some piss-in-a-can beer tucked under their arm. To use a favorite expression of Bob Otis from Dropdead, much respect to these bands who do seat-of-their pants touring, usually in vans that will inevitably run into mechanical problems, having shows canceled or getting a paltry turnout and having to sleep on people's floors when available. And, after all that, can still let loose with a mind-ripping musical performance. Much respect!

Some observations from my less-than-scientific survey. At the grocery stores, food prices have been going up, sometimes startlingly so, sometimes more subtly. For instance—and it's just one small example—there's a low-fat Weight Watcher's frozen pizza I like and, at one store, I've seen the price climb from $2.50 to $2.89 and, now, $3.79. For a frozen pizza! Even at the cheaper store, it's still $2.89. I know I shouldn't be buying these processed foods, that I should try to make my own, but I'm not always that ambitious, to be honest. At least a loaf of Italian bread from the bakery is still reasonable and I can make a lot of sandwiches from it. Still, it just went up from $.99 to $1.29 and I've heard that there will be more increases in break and milk prices. Since I'm only shopping for two, our food bill isn't too bad, but I see the carriages filled to the brim being pushed by mothers or fathers who obviously have many more mouths to feed—and since this particular store seems to have more of a blue-collar clientele, I'm sure it has more of an effect on these families.

Health insurance is another necessary expense and I've written about it in this space before. Some workplaces offer better benefits but the insurance from Ellen's work costs nearly $800 a month in premiums and that's before the prescriptions and doctor's visits. We've been with our current carrier around a year and office visits have gone from $15 to $25 and a few of our prescriptions cost $50 each. At least we don't have to pay for it on our own—that ran us over $1100 a month when Ellen was between jobs.

Hell, record prices are getting crazy, especially for imports with the weaker dollar—Felix has written about the economics of record prices and the like. Of course, records aren't a necessity. Wait—I take that back. That's *sacrilege* in these pages, and I'm sorry, I had a momentary lapse of sanity there. Speaking of sanity, I'd like to know who the hell has $700 to drop on an Antidote 7" or $800 on a Queers "Webelos" 7," both of which sold at that price on eBay, recently. And I know there are punk records that change hands at even higher prices, like the Fix EPs and the Necros' *Sex Drive.* Hell, given the current state of the economy and investments taking a beating, if you got in on the "ground floor" (the initial public offering!) for that Queers' record, it's had quite a return. I actually did a calculation to see what the return on investment had been. I paid $2 for it in 1984 (I know—shut up, Al) and, as I said, it just sold for $800. Mine isn't in quite as good condition as the one that sold so let's say it's worth $700. My overall annual return on investment is 35,000%. Not bad. Of course, these days, it's harder to buy rare stuff at a low price but you can always speculate on new initial public offerings.

OK, I'll knock it off. And I'm not crying poverty here, just making some observations. Ellen and I are pretty fortunate in a lot of respects. I know that some people have no health insurance and will often delay seeking medical care and do without meds. She works with folks who suffer from a myriad of alcohol, drug, and mental health issues and, a lot of the time, homelessness is another factor that her clients have to deal with. Forgive the hackneyed expression, but a lot of these people don't know where their next meal is coming from. Real estate values are going in the crapper and many people who took out "sub-prime" mortgages soon find they're unable to pay their mortgages and their houses go into foreclosure.

Those types of economic issues will be covered on one page of the *Boston Globe* but then you turn to the Living/Arts section and see reviews of restaurants where a meal out costs more than my food bill for the entire week. You look through the weekly Sunday magazine section and see expensive houses and clothing. Hell, even some non-elegant places are ridiculously expensive. $18 for a pizza with a couple of toppings at Bertucci's? I know—we're better off getting a few slices or a large pizza from the local family-owned shop and that's what we do most of the time, anyway. Even that's not as cheap as it used to be.

So there's a tremendously simplified analysis, going more on a gut feeling than any deep research, although I try to keep at least informed about what's happening and I'm a tad skeptical when I hear people like Bush and right-leaning, pro-corporate analysts saying it's not a recession. I'm not

an economist—I had one year of it in college and that was a long time ago. My cousin Richard is an economics professor (chair of his department, in fact) and I suppose I could have emailed him and gotten his input, but my question would have been along the lines of "duh, gee Richard… are we in a recession?" As much as I don't think I'm a complete dumbass, I sometimes have a tough time articulating things the way I'd like and asking someone who has undergrad, Master's, and doctoral degrees from Harvard and another Master's from the London School of Economics seems a tad intimidating, family or not. Also, when I thought about writing to him, I was coming up against deadline. Maybe I'll solicit his opinion at some point.

Richard's not a bad guy actually. I don't talk to him very often. I think the last time was at my dad's funeral in '04. I didn't care for him that much, growing up. Being a smart kid, he had a certain arrogance. Also, his bar mitzvah service was three hours long, which required way more patience than a 13-year-old should have to endure (we're the same age) but his part of the family—his parents were my Aunt Bette and Uncle Bernie—was a lot more religious than mine and my Uncle George's. George is actually a Reform Jew and his son Tom's bar mitzvah only took 45 minutes and I didn't even have to wear a yarmulke. Richard ended up being an Orthodox Jew, whereas he grew up in the slightly more liberal Conservative sect, same as I did, but the services for my bar mitzvah didn't last three hours. I know, it doesn't make sense to say that being a Conservative Jew is in any way liberal but, compared to the Orthodox… well, let's move on.

I also remember he and his brother Robert (who, unfortunately, still has something of a less-than-charming personality) were big New York Giants fans. I imagine I should really be pissed about that now, since the Giants tore the hearts out of Patriots fans in the last Super Bowl. I'll give Richard credit, though. He got me into the MC5. It was kind of by accident. When I was about 15 or 16, I was visiting my aunt and uncle's house and Richard was in his room listening to records. I remember walking in and he was listening to America's "Sister Golden Hair" and playing a flute along with it. Another reason to have a low opinion of him, with such dubious musical taste. And a flute? Yeesh. At that time, I was rockin' out to Aerosmith and the Sweet. So the America record ends and Richard takes out another record and he said, in essence, we're about to hear something completely ridiculous. I thought him playing America was ridiculous enough (although I'll admit I liked "A Horse With No Name" when I was ten or so). The record was *Kick Out The Jams* and, the minute the opening chords of "Ramblin' Rose" burst through his stereo, it was love at first listen. He thought this was silly, stupid music. I'd imagine the record belonged to one of his older brothers or, less likely, his sister since he was the youngest of four kids. All I know is that was some of the highest energy shit I'd heard up to that point. Around the same time, I also heard the censored, "brothers and sisters" instead of "motherfuckers" version of "Kick Out The Jams" (the song) on one of those cheapie comps on Warner Bros. "Special Products" imprint. I found it at the Paperback Booksmith (later a Waldenbooks) in the Swampscott Mall. They had a pretty good record section and would have some decent cutouts, if anyone remembers what those were. I probably didn't pay any more than $4 or $5 for this double LP.

The cover had a drawing of a dude with longish blonde hair strumming an electric guitar and, above him, there was the album's title, *Heavy Metal*, spelled out in thick gold letters, pointing upward at a 45-degree angle and, now that I'm staring at it, looking quite phallic. Above that logo of sorts, it says that the two LP set features "24 Electrifying Performances" from such heavy metal bands as Buffalo Springfield, the Grateful Dead, Van Morrison, Delaney and Bonnie and those über-rippers The Eagles! OK, in fairness, there's some legit metal/hard rock from Black Sabbath, Deep Purple, Foghat, Uriah Heep ("Stealin"!!) and Alice Cooper. The lead-off track is "Kick Out The Jams," and that ain't a bad start at all. It wasVolume 2 of their *Superstars Of The '70s* anthology and, ostensibly, a label sampler for material ca. '70-74. Overall, there are some pretty good tunes but callin' it *Heavy Metal* seems to be a lack of truth in advertising. Much like, after starting to listen to some Jimi Hendrix around '73, I found a cheapie album called *Jimi Hendrix At His Best, Vol. 1*, which was basically stuff never meant to be released and the low price reflected the quality, I suppose. In a Hendrix book by David Shadwick, he called it "The most arid and worthless musical adventure that Hendrix ever had the misfortune to be involved in," and said they were apparently "loose home jams with pianist Mike Ephron and percussionist Juma Sultan at Jimi's rented 'Shokan' house in Woodstock, New York, 1969." I don't even remember much about the music but it certainly wasn't Jimi at his best. Not by a long shot. I do remember trying to trade this record to my stoner cousins Jimmy and Steve for their copy of *Smash Hits* that I'd already borrowed one time. I don't think the trade occurred but, when I borrowed *Smash Hits* again, it somehow stayed in my collection. Much like their copy of Captain Beyond's first album, with the 3D hologram cover that I've written about before. I don't know how I got away with it, but like Richard, Jimmy, and Steve, did enhance my musical education.

Where were we? Oh yeah, economics. Maybe we're actually back to the same kind of inflation and recession we had in the '70s. At least there's not a gasoline shortage—yet! I'm old enough to remember the long lines at the pumps for a while. And I also remember that one of President Gerald Ford's ideas to lead to charge against inflation was to get people to wear "WIN" buttons, which stood for "Whip Inflation Now!" This was probably a contributing factor to Ford losing the election to Jimmy Carter in 1976, although the more likely explanation was that he pardoned Richard Nixon. But it seemed quite silly. Maybe if Ford had said we need to kick out the jams against inflation, it might have worked better. He could have captured the youth vote although, at the time, the MC5 were much more of a cult item at that point than now although I still doubt that "Kick Out The Jams" gets played after "Stairway To Heaven" on classic rock radio. Also, I don't think that the MC5 guys would have appreciated their song being appropriated by a Republican. After all, John Mellencamp got pissed when a few of his songs were getting played at McCain campaign rallies and Bruce

Springsteen had the same reaction when Reagan quoted "Born In The USA" in the '80s.

***

Let's kick out some present-day jams, starting with a roundup of what's been happening in Boston lately. And I'm not talking about the Dropkick Murphys, either. Let Red Sox closer Jonathan Papelbon do his little jig dancing to their song "I'm Shipping Up To Boston." Pap would probably have to do another sort of dancing to these bands. And what's been happening in Boston is that some people are playing in two or three bands at the same time, and the different permutations create a wider variety. First up is the three song 7" by LIBYANS, "Welcome To The Neighborhood" (Shock To The System, PO BOX 300991, Jamaica Plain, MA, 02130, www.myspace.com/shocktothesystem-records). The poppy title track owes more than a little to the Avengers' "Cheap Tragedies," although vocalist Liz Panella has a lower, somewhat rougher voice. I imagine the Dangerhouse-type logo on the record isn't meant to be ironic—and I don't mean that as a slight, either. It's a catchy song. The two songs on the flip, "Cough It Up and "Higher Standards," take a faster hardcore punk turn.

Next is a demo tape by GENERAL INTEREST (59 Myrtle St., Somerville, MA 02145, general interest punk@ gmail.com), who are a fairly new band with two people from the Conversions and one from Red Thread, all playing different instruments than in their other bands. Lead mouth Steve Shea conveys some sarcastic sentiments. You can't read along to his words because the lyrics sheet features a passage about Hitler's sexual history but "Out With A Bang" is an undisguised slam at the Italian band ("would it shock you if I called you a fag?") and their so-called shock value, no doubt inspired by a show they played in Boston last year, where there was a fight during their set. "Myth of The Female Musician" pokes fun at the all-too-prevalent mentality that, in essence, girls can't rock. From a musical standpoint, it doesn't fit an easy definition, although shards of post-punk mix with a punk attitude. "Bagley," the final song, has a serious Minutemen jones. Stretching the boundaries like the Conversions, albeit without the hardcore element.

Another new band with a cassette demo is LIKE RATS (likerats boston@ gmail.com), who have the Conversions' vocalist Terry Cuozzo on guitar and Pat Wilding (Mecchanibal, Daggers Rule) on vocals. An energetic hardcore sound with a hint of Poison Idea, particularly in Pat's raspy vocals. A quick-paced, no nonsense approach and thoughtful lyrics on a variety of topics—"Grandfather Clause," which is about moving on and refusing to acknowledge what you were a part of. I imagine that weighs on the so-called "older" punks, who sometimes question their continued involvement in what some perceive as immature pursuits.

WEAPONS GRADE (PO Box 301426, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130, www.myspace.com/weaponsgradeboston), the latest band fronted by Craig Lewis (ex-Melee, Keep Laughing) use a combination of raw thrash and more melodic properties that isn't easily pigeonholed. The lyrics are intense and personal, dealing with very real pain and emotional trauma and passionately exorcised. In all honesty, it's tough to listen to, at times. This recording sounds like a band still looking for its footing, although there are solid moments ("Put To Sleep," "Razor Blades"). Having seen Weapons Grade improve in the live setting over the past few months, I hope that will be reflected the next time they hit the studio.

Ending the Boston segment, NOTHING BUT ENEMIES, formerly known as Slimy Cunt and The Fist Fucks (for real), have their first album, "Mental Damage," out on Welfare Records (58 River St., Haverhill, MA 01832, www.welfarerecords.net). There's a declaration from this band's vocalist Opie at the outset—a shout-out to all the rejects, freaks, drunks, mentally ill, dropouts and others, including the people "that ain't even accepted by your so-called friends in punk rock... come join us!" A-fuckin'-men to that sentiment and the pure hate is conveyed with a direct hit. Opie rants and brays and the music is a heady, mainly mid-tempo hardcore punk bash. A visceral ugliness but it's also a controlled, concise assault. A Blitz-ish touch figures into "No Apologies" and "Detonation" reminded me of the Dead Boys a little. This is music for the anti-social, the ugly and proud, to quote the late, great Sheer Terror.

Hailing from Cleveland come NO PEACE? and their *Zombie Brains* EP (Decision Of Fate, 2122 Robbins Ave., #108, Niles, OH 44446, play_it _faster @hotmail.com). Raw, nearly blown-out sounding hardcore and there are both old school Swedish and Japanese hardcore influences, at least to my ears. It's just a way to give an indication that it's high energy fodder. No Peace? definitely share the devil-may-care aggro of other DIY bands from that region. The fact that other Clevo hardcore "luminaries" were involved in the mixing and mastering of the recording is another indicator that this ain't gonna be no pleasant-sounding sonic excursion. Feedback, wheedling lead guitar and agonized vocals. The only misstep is the semi-sung, off-key vocal for the slightly slower-paced "Thanks Friend."

Moving west, it's off to Michigan for THE STATE and their four-song *Verboten* EP on their own Statement Records (www.statenoillusions.com). The hook here is two of the songs are in German and the other pair in English. The EP was originally supposed to come out in Germany but the band ended up doing it themselves. Gritty hardcore punk, as always, imbued with speed and agitation and the songs here are better than the ones from their recent split with I Object. The not-so-secret weapon in this band remains guitarist Art Tendler, adept at both scorching leads and buzzing rhythm work . Lyrics casting a jaundiced eye, especially towards those who genuflect before their god or their government. Age is only a number and they kick the ass of many bands half their age and younger.

My pick for the month comes from the Belgian band SUNPOWER and their second LP *Pain For Profit* (Holy Shit!/Still Holding On, www.myspace.com/stillholdingonrecords). Ah, the LP with the gatefold cover—how I love them, even with the depressing drawing of an animal about to be murdered so the woman on the back can wrap its fur around her neck. A clear US punk and hardcore influence, here. "BXHell," for instance, has surfy guitar ala the Dead Kennedy and Mike Meat's vocals sound like a cross between Jello and Willy from Young Wasteners. Once in awhile, there will be a change-up, such as

the jazzier rhythm for "Gore's World." Most of the time, though, they play at a faster speed and songs are short and catchy. And add "Stuck Inside The Midlife Crisis" to the ever-growing library of "getting older in the scene" odes. I don't necessarily "wish I was a teen again," like Mike sings, but also have similar feelings of ambivalence. But fuck it… do what you want and look at this as a musical fountain of youth.

Still Holding On has also unleashed the new 7" by THE YOUTHS, from Portugal. It's called *Generationless* and it follows the band's demo, which was pressed on vinyl by Criminal IQ Records awhile back. This is catchy, anthemic punk with a garage tinge. Not a lot of variation from track to track—just sturdy, tuneful songs with bright-sounding guitar and plenty of rhythmic punch. Along with the boisterousness comes some sharp commentary about flag waving and religion, to name a few. Restless youth, to borrow a trite phrase—but nothing trite about the music.

Wrapping things up for now, there's a reissue of Japanese band D.O.N.D.O.N's *Last Warning* on Schizophrenic Records (17 West 4th St., Hamilton, ON L9C 3M2, CANADA, www.schizophrenicrex.com), originally released in 1991 in a quantity of 200 and appended with three compilation tracks. The initials stand for Detestation of Negative, Destruction of Nuclear and it's throttling hardcore that would have made much better listening for yours truly than the grunge shit I was into at the time. Let's not talk about that—let's talk about the pummeling content here. D.O.N.D.O.N had a visceral aggressiveness and, along with the thrash, incorporating metallic guitar trills and even a few odd effects. There are a couple of slower songs that sound like they came off the "Protest and Survive" assembly line but, for the most part, it's raw, clattering thrash in the traditional Japanese style. Not on the same level as the Japanese hardcore legends but still making a loud statement.

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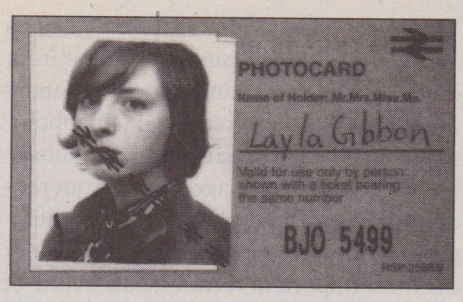

Music that Sounds Like Raymond Pettibon Drawings

One time when I was a teenage skate rat, I tried to interview Ed Templeton for my zine, only he thought I was hitting on him and wouldn't do it. If you knew me as a teenager (or even now) you would know that is the most ridiculous thing to think. I am the least flirtatious person on earth and I am such a champion nerd that I can launch into a five-thousand-word dissertation on the relative merits of late-period Black Flag instrumentals with no notion that the dude I am talking to would way rather be, um, doing other things than listening to me demonstrate what a total dork I am. I used to hang out with this dude who looked at me incredulously when I said I would never be able to play the guitar parts on The Wipers' *Youth of America*. I mean for me the guitar sound on that record is kind of epic and mythic/mysterious and thus unimaginable in the context of my mere hands. For him it would probably be a lazy evening's project. It's just a guitar part. It's just a studio trick. Except it isn't!

It's the sound of bad weather, bad drugs, paranoia, weird alien conspiracies, evenings alone, walks through isolated parts of town at the wrong moment in time. It totally evokes the Northwest—an isolated, doomed, weather-beaten-down/too many drugs genius sound. It's not something you can replicate with your hands—you could maybe make an approximation of, it or maybe even an exact replica. But it would be wrong somehow. Even if you decided to do a band using the idea of that as your master plan, it would not sum up an entire paranoid universe that doesn't actually exist—except in your head when you listen to *Youth of America*. Too many people wanna do a band like VOID and just make a bad metal douche sound instead. Or they wanna do a band that's along the lines of the Dead C and somehow they can't get the atmospherics quite right and instead of hexed transcendence you are very aware of the collection of devices connected to the guitar spread out on the floor, spoils of a pawn-shop pedal spree. Meaning that there is some weird chemical reaction that separates the sound from the scene depiction of. Endless Re-enactments! Doomed to Dream! Therefore no one should do anything ever again.

I want weirdo mutants, not shambolic dudes who smoke a lot of pot and get a lot of ass and keep it on the regular regularly. I like having an idea of music and not having that idea ruined by actually meeting the musicians and finding out they're just regular folx, which I guess is me playing my part in upholding the myth of rocknroll. Basically I want music to be as it is in my head, not made by actual humans that participate in actual human interactions. Not too much to ask? Ho ho *ho*. (*You will never make a sound that's as liberating as the guitar on void's "Explode". Don't even try!*)

What is it about a person or a band or an idea that makes you want to create your own thing rather than just consume theirs? What makes you feel like a fan eternally stuck in the audience as opposed to the feeling that makes you think that you have something to contribute to what is happening on stage? That you could make your own weirdo version of it? Endless offshoots versus starry-eyed worship.

I like reading old Minutemen interviews because they were such dork fans, so obsessed and reverent and yet the music they made was a total irreverent celebration of this, they kind of turned being a total fan into this other thing. This joyful inclusive sound that makes the listener feel part of something worth investigating and yet very aware that what they are listening to is (a disruptive) part of rocknroll and thus in itself fanworthy. See also: first Meat Puppets 7". The music creates a world in which you are able to exist. But you have to also create your own thing to remain an active participant is the process, not a reproduction antique. This is all connected. If you have been following my fascinating journey through life and thusly fervently reading these columns on a month-to-month basis you will know that I went to the Great Pacific

Northwest for the Sex Vid 7" release rather than going to the upcoming punk rage fest, Chaos in Tejas. (Though I may still go to that? Um, probably not, since it seems it'll ultimately cost more in the $400 range and I live more in the minus-$400 range) At any rate, Olympia, the city of ghosts of former ideas and happenings—definitely was weird to be there in the context of Sex Vid rather than a Yo Yo a Go Go or Ladyfest. Felt way less frantic and run-around and more weird and fucked up like a slowed-down Wipers guitar part or driving round listening to Thrones in the end times.

We flew into Seattle and it was fuckin' snowing; the airport had a weird sterile rock/zen garden that we sat in and watched the snow fall. I spent the flight reading this book, *Enter Naomi, SST, LA and All That* by Joe Carducci which Hubbs lent me months ago. I was totally consumed by it to the point that I was one of those douchebags that reads while walking along, all the way to where Sam and RJ were waiting for us by the curb. *Enter Naomi* was written as a result of finding out two years after the fact that the SST house photographer Naomi Peterson had died. It works as a history of SST and Black Flag from an insider's perspective. Carducci was the label manager, I think, but as it says on the subject line on the back cover, "Music/ Photography/ Women/Los Angeles."

While not quite a memoir, though it sort of is that too, it's more about the women of SST and the history of punk and how music and place and scene and scumbag geniuses make things transcendent and disgusting at once. There were a few moments where I felt the depictions of the women were off; just felt like they were kind of cartoon "crazy wild lady!", which is to say, a little one-dimensional. And I'm not saying that the women/girls of early LA punk/SST weren't wild—more that the characterizations seemed a little fetishistic/simplistic in certain places, but really that's kind of a minor quibble.

In using Naomi's life trajectory as his starting point, Carducci creates a really refreshing way of covering familiar punk-rock-history-book territory, i.e., the Myth of Black Flag™. The book switches from biographical detail, of Naomi, of LA, of Medea, the woman that inspired "Jealous Again," to all-lower-case emails sent from other lost SST girls, and his own esoteric memories elicited from a certain photograph or flier. He details the exact manner in which Naomi managed to go from random-punk-girl-in distress-slash-potential-groupie to scene photographer for one of the most important record labels in one of the least women-friendly environments. You will lose a day to this book, I swear. It works as a great companion piece to *Get in the Van* or the Punk Planet Flag interviews, and opens up another LA where the Bukowski antihero is a woman who doesn't quite get eaten by the scene/society, but loses and gains something else in terms of identity and memory. The fliers and ephemera, photos, recording notes, press releases, postcards, and diaries add to the collage-like nature of the book. It's like a conversation rather than a broadcast, if that makes sense, and really opens up a world like the best books do.

I also read RJ's old *Forced Exposures* which made me rue the lack of great music zines—I know, the internet, the internet, blah blah blah, but there's nothing as wide-reaching, insane, creepy, funny, and obsessive as that zine in existence now. That's a definite call to arms, by the way. Half of Sex Vid lives across from a place that sells Rippin' Tacos. RJ said he used to be vegetarian but started to feel the meat vibrations a few years back, which could the name of your new zine? Right? Super creepy. MEAT VIBRATIONS. Rippin' Tacos is your fake OC Reagan band. We sat in on a Sex Vid practice sesh (minus Judd) which Hubbs' is bootlegging as I write this. Eighty dollars of eBay gold—imagine the NECROS trying to play INTEGRITY "Vocal Test." Livin' the Dream tapes. Also watch out for Sue's Meat Puppets first 7" Brooklyn basement scene explosion 2010 future. Heard some gnarly stories about a 20-year-old Iraqi war vet who is now an anti-war campaigner. Total annihilation. Sam's drums randomly smashed the back window of his car in the car park of the pizzeria where the show, which was free with Iron Lung and Sisters and ltd ed. eBay gold merch, was going to be in Oly. My best friend called me because she was walking home from attending a Boredoms show at one a.m. alone by the River Charles on the opposite coast and malevolent dark forms kept appearing from the shadows.

Of course Sex Vid were fucking great live—kids were doing flips off the pizza counter into the crowd and the new shit sounds incredible played in such circumstances, totally brutal brain-damage LSD math-genius disturbance. Heavy like late nights/early mornings—which is which? I liked Sisters a lot, but saw a lot of *Evol/Sister* replicants when I was a teenage grunge fan so wanted more from them, kind of. Especially in regards to the dude that apes Thurston's voice so mechanically. He definitely needs to figure out how to not do that. Kanako's voice is super rad, though she only sang on one song and I really dug her Moe Tucker-channeled-through-Jesus and Mary Chain drumming style. Iron Lung also was great, like them waaaay better live than on record, though the new LP cover art is next-level greatness.

Listened to lots of BATS LPs and 12"s, the Dead C Whitehouse 12", and bought some weirdo mid '80s Battle of the Bands/Cramps mutation shit-fi 7" with a photocopied-on-legal-paper cover with incredibly intricate autistic doom art that was molding. Also heard more Ween hanging out with Sue and RJ than I did for the entire '90s and '00s combined. Bummerz. No sleep pretty much, except on a dirty mattress in some junkie kid's apartment in Olympia while a lifelong Petty Crime fan tried to get me to tell him something I couldn't figure out. (Petty Crime was my teenage art-punker band with aforementioned best friend). Sex Vid will be playing my backyard some summer afternoon; SF's all right if you like saxophones/green drugs/feeling like earth.

ENDNOTES:

1) CAMPINGSEX 1914 double-LP reissue
2) Late-period Black Flag on headphones
3) Suburban Lawns, "Janitor"
4) Nixe 7" and rumors of a LP discography
5) *Breakfast Without Meat* zine, the issue with the Black Flag interview
6) My future contains a Thera-knitted Faith/Void scarf
7) The Brat on the cover of *Lowrider* magazine Feb '82 Issue. *Need this*—also the fact that The Brat is putting out a discog. With

unreleased songs… Dreamy!
8) Coffee in Seattle is delicious; coffee at the Seattle airport is a shitsystem
9) Angry Grunge Dude #1: "You Have Great Thighs©"
layla.gibbon@gmail.com
whatwewantisfree.blogspot.com (older columns I wrote are here)

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

All right, punk, this is it. Choose ya out. We're gonna settle this right here. You can talk about yer Cro Mags and yer Negative Approaches, yep, alla them badasses carved out a hunka turf in this town, but I tell you there is now a gang that is so bitchin' bad that they would cut them dudes down to snotnose crybabies, and in less than three minutes too.

Could I run Lester Bangs' name into the dirt anymore? Well…fuck…I could try. The above paragraph is ripped almost word for word from some shit L.B. left hanging almost forty years ago. When he was writing about badass, it was the sexual innuendo and grating punk raucousness of The Troggs. Yep, those quaint limeys that dropped "Wild Thing" on the world, the tune that you probably associate with your parents generation balling, and rightfully so. Now the Troggs've got themselves a great catalogue of drag-your-loved-one-by-the-hair and beat a saber-toothed-with-a-mammoth's-femur-bone squall, there's no denying it. But they were from a time when suggesting you knew what a clitoris was in song and sound was an almost sacrilegious act. And nowadays everyone knows what a clit is. Ugh. Badass now is a band that forgets what clit looks like. Who forget what dick is. Who forget clit and dick. Who forget and furthermore is reviled—or at least sound convincingly reviled—by the thought of procreation, fornication, and unification of human body parts and the logical conclusion of the fluid exchanges that dutifully follow.

The group that I wanna discuss today, Billy Bao, dutifully demonstrates the passing of time with such a horrific negation of almost everything that The Troggs stood for (sex, love, romance), along with everything that everybody who either loved them then or now or hated them then or now could possibly invest with the slightest sliver of hope or joy. When I say almost, I mean that any b-grade musicologist with a bad posture and an intimate knowledge of stylus cleaning would be able to draw a diagram connecting cavemen-Trogg to caveman-Bao by their similar use of pounding rhythm (uh, rock music). But caveman-Bao, last link on his evolutionary scale, and caveman-Trogg, the first in a long line of your fave garage and punque pals, are like the homo-erectus and the Neanderthal in terms of their thematic relationship, and this is where I'd like to spend my time, not comparing them bash for bash or beat to beat.

We could suggest that B.B. would make a good soundtrack to a Lovecraftian horror scene, but this would probably credit Lovecraft more than he deserves. B.B. is in a league with bands like Gehenna and Brainbombs. Pure cult soundtrack played by the deranged, if you believed anything yet written about them. And I believe everything, and more. I believe all the shit that *I* write about them.

I rapped a little about these guys last month, gushing like a teenager. That was about their incredible 10", the noise-rock bombast blast of *Fuck Separation*. Time has passed, I've gotten older, wiser. The new 12", *Dialectics Of Shit*, is as frustrating, confounding, and awe-inspiring as the 10"—full of its heavy swagger but coupled with experiments with harsh feedback and abrasive sheets of noise. I'm hoping they don't get another record out in the next month so this column doesn't become a B.B. fan hour: upon being invited to columnize by the editorial team behind *MRR*, I was warned against such behavior, and wanting to keep this high-paying position as long as Vanity Fair isn't returning my calls, next month will be all about the Filth/Blatz split.

Treading a similar sonic terrain as the Billy Bao band, though dressed in an antipodean garb of crocodile hide and kangaroo skin, the Australian band Zond has tainted the world with its brand of scum-drenched noise-rock on a split 12" with Melbourne's most mystifying artiste/musique group, Hi God People. Zond probably could have found themselves at home in the gutters of San Francisco in '82, sharing a couple of bottles of wine with ol' Will Shatter, and if you like the sound of SST when drugs began to creep into the office and release schedule, then you'll probably dig on the dirge that Zond exercise. To get further into the literary field, if Billy Bao and company could soundtrack a Lovecraftian tale with their heavy overtones of terror and disease, Zond could convincingly craft their tunes to detail a Phillip K. Dick story, encased as they are in paranoia and claustrophobia.

Another recent Australian release that may excite you is Deaf Wish, who've released a new 7" on Idget Child limited to only 200 copies. If we can continue on the SST spiel and imagine that a little time has passed and the guys from Deep Wound have started a new band, you might find that Deaf Wish has whatever came from this project in their record collection, along with plenty of Red Kross tunes. Hunt this one down if you're not afraid of what happened in the late 1980s.

While you're probably not convinced that it's necessary, I'd like to celebrate the arrival of the No Hope For The Kids singles collection 7" by popping open a bottle of Krug Vintage 1979 that I traded my Fix 7" for. No Hope For The Kids is, at this point, fairly well known, appearing on the last *MRR* compilation and having a couple of members from very active Danish punk bands, so it may not fit the ALL FOREIGN JUNK oeuvre, but: I have been listening to this, I think it's a classy record, it just came out, they're a bunch of dirty foreign scumbags, and you will probably like it if you are reading *Maximum*. If you have not heard them and you have an affection for English punk, from the Adverts to Blitz, then you'll want to hear these singles. Thanks, Tomas!

Norway's Parlamentarisk Sodomi has a CD released on Australian grind label No Escape Records. This is a one-man project and I can't identify the name or identity of the guy behind it, but he is obsessed with phallic symbolism and raw, heavy grindcore that needs no real in-depth exploration (it's fast, it's heavy, it's offensive to both one's ears and delicate constitution)

but it caught my ear as the best of the genre I've heard over the past couple of months since Agents Of Abhorrence's incredible *earth.water.sun* CDEP rolled over just about every grind record on the planet.

The last couple of items I'd like to discuss this month are print fanzines.

First, from the UK, a country that only makes it in the ALL FOREIGN JUNK door by sheer virtue that nobody really seems to care about it's cultural production post-Heresy, Rip-core (etc.), we have a new fanzine named *Quality Control*. From what I can glean from the pages, the editor is a Polish girl living in London and enjoying everything that city has to offer: expensive rent and chimney-sweepin' urchins who tip their hat and refer to you as "guvnor." Her writing style is fresh and animated, and generally engaging, though she could do with a harsh critic or two dissecting and tidying up some useless sentences from time to time. But, brother, couldn't we all? *(We certainly could, brother. –Ed.)*

Aside from a couple of disposable interviews, there is a well-written exploration of "Ten UK Records You Should Know," and for someone always suspicious of UK punk ("We Don't Need The English" is the national anthem in Australia) it was good to read. The interview with Invasion shed a little light on their mysterious Spanish ways, and the lengthy interview with Max Hirax was littered with all kinds of post-grad student political babble that I took a great deal of interest in because Max seems well-informed and I'm OK with reading someone's interpretations of Marx as long as they aren't an illiterate crustie reacting to their ideal upbringing by becoming an uptight pseudo-radical. Max isn't buried too far in academia that he loses the ability to eloquently translate his political views into language that can sit on a page after a discussion of an Electro-Hippies record, and this makes for good interview-speak…even if you don't like Spazz and commies.

Quality Control is rounded up by a similarly academic dissection of a Citizens Arrest lyric that could have done with some editing, but the perceptive readers will be able to comprehend its argument. Overall, a promising first issue, and I'm looking forward to seeing where she goes with it. I'm not the kind of gentleman who likes to fill his column with a bunch of email addresses and web links, but for print fanzines struggling under the weight of the disinterested web generation I will make an exception. Email greennutter@hotmail.com for information on how to turn your dollars into pounds and purchase this paper stack.

From New Zealand is the third issue of *Hear Nothing See Nothing Say Nothing*, the name I believe taken from a great song by Blondie. This zine's purpose is to be an Australian/NZ punk zine, and it covers this through interviewing the bands Crux, Coexister, Conniption, and Stranger, and there's an interview with, uh, me, about my writing *Distort* zine. Unfortunately, I responded to his questions while under the influence of the Worst and other such highlights from the Mutha Records discography that my friend Clint had taped me, and I came across as a real stick-in-the-mud to the generally approachable vibe of the zine, as put forth by Nigel's idealistic politics and the appreciative and open responses by other interviewees. Generally, this zine held very little that interested me, aside from a story of the editor's experience in jail, arrested as a domestic terrorist and still on charges. Nigel's story was strangely nonchalant and relaxed as he talked about playing touch rugby with other inmates, and actually came across more like a tour diary than anything else.

I'd like it if more punks were too distracted to tour with their shitty band by joining radical fringe groups—the world would have more a more interesting political terrain, and would be saved a whole lot of electricity from dudes trying to play the Amebix discography as reinterpreted with flute. I hate to get back into the mud and resume my position, but if someone is arrested and charged with charges this extreme, they could do well to ignore writing reviews of other punk fanzines and paying attention to discussing the questions anybody would naturally have when confronted with this kind of interesting talk. C'mon, fella! Let it out! The people want to know! Hopefully next issue will find more talk of this nature.

Look, asshole! My band STRAIGHT-JACKET NATION is touring the United States of America this May/June in order to experience freedom for the first time in our miserable lives. Come to our shows and teach us the revolutionary techniques learned from the Boston Tea Party and we will trade with you our unique skills in haberdashery. Visit the website www.culthardcore.org/straightjacketnation. Also, fellow Australians from FABULOUS DIAMONDS (acoustic techno?) and NAKED ON THE VAGUE (no-no-no-wave?) will be making ears bleed from coast to coast. Visit us all and bless us with totemic items from your rich cultural heritage. We too believe that freedom isn't free.

And! If you play punk, hardcore, garage, noise, or any music with a bit of grit and rawness to it, or if you write a fanzine that loosely covers the same sonic territory, and you *don't* live in the US, Japan, or Sweden, please get in touch. My address is Daniel Stewart: PO Box 239 North Carlton, Victoria 3054, Australia. If you'd like to email me, try distortthe-world@gmail.com.

"What the fuck is that?" I ask my friend Jeff, from a punk band called The Dead Boys, as we sit at the now-deceased bar at CBGB in New York City.

"What do you think it is, moron?" says Jeff in his tough-guy voice, as he folds his hands into fists and pokes his thumbs out from between his pointer fingers and middle fingers and hold them over his eyes.

"Jeff's being an alien again," replies Beth, Jeff's better half, as she takes a swig of the bottle of Rolling Rock on the bar.

"I honestly don't know," I explain to my bug-eyed pal, who I saw grace the stage of the club about a month earlier. I think then he was more sober. He could at least move.

"Guess," says Beth, a longtime friend who shines with honesty, and whose smile makes me warm inside every time I see her.

I look at the object in my hand. It's

something white in a clear plastic container. The thing looks, well, honestly, like someone cast a human turd in a junior high school art class.

"White doody?" I say, clueless.

Everyone laughs.

That includes Jeff, Beth, our friend Walter, who also plays guitar in a New York punk rock band, Jon, a famous photographer, and Napoleon, this guy who is always there and who we always think is the *other* guy's friend.

"Close," says Jeff, as he removes his fists from his face and sips his beer. "It's Jimi Hendrix's dick! And it is white! What the hell is with that?"

Again, everyone laughs.

But me.

I look down at the object in the clear cylindrical container once again, and do notice it does have some sort of shape. Perhaps more penis than feces....but it's a stretch.

"That Cynthia Plaster Caster chick made it," exclaims Jeff.

"And we hijacked it," exclaims Jon.

"You stole Jimi Hendrix's penis?" I ask them in amazement.

I knew of Ms. Plaster Caster's work well, and was wondering just how my pals were now in possession of one of the most valuable penis castings in history. And just how long it would take while they played "catch" with it before it would hit the floor and shatter into a million little Star-Spangled Banner-guitar-player phallus pieces.

"It's from the art show at the gallery," explains Beth, "and we're just borrowing it. It will be returned very shortly!"

"Shortly," laughs Jeff, "I'll say!"

I look at the white doody and it is short. I mean, maybe six inches, tops. This is Jimi Hendrix's dick? No wonder he played a big guitar.

"The guy had a small Les Paul," I say to my friends, "and considering he was, well, you know, anyway, as Lily Von Schtup from "Blazing Saddles" would say, "It's not twue!"

Everyone laughs except Napoleon, who comments that it looks rather large to him.

We try to ignore him, and silently curse one another for inviting the guy along.

"Ya know," I say, as I do a quick shot of Jose Cuervo with a Rolling Rock chaser, "that penis could have been mine!"

"You got a small white turd in your pants?" asks Jeff.

"No," I explain, "I mean, that dick cast could have been of my regal beagle."

"You?" asks Beth, "I thought that groupie only did rock stars!"

"Besides," adds Jeff, "you'd need a microscope just to look at yours!"

"No, really," I explain, "that chick was gonna cast my cock!"

"Bullshit," everyone says.

Then I tell them the story.

Which happened about five years earlier.

They just sit there with their jaws on the floor.

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"What's up, Puss?" asks my editor, John Strausbaugh, from New York Press, as I enter his office with my Yorkshire Terrorist, Scooter, who runs to John right away for the treats in his upper left-hand drawer.

"PJ!" John yells, "Pussy Junior! Why's your father such a puss?" he asks my dog teasingly.

Scooter just cocks his head sideways for a few seconds, then barks for his treats.

John gives in, and Scooter then wants more and more.

"Whatcha doin' round these parts?" asks Strausbaugh, as I rarely make office appearances and really like working from home. Plus, the people in the advertising department give me the creeps.

"I got an idea for a story, boss," I say to John.

He likes it when I call him "boss."

I figure he thinks he's Perry White or J. Jonah Jameson.

"Yeah Puss?" he asks.

I explain to him that I got some press release from Cynthia Plaster Caster.

"That old groupie?" he says, "been there, done that!"

"Well," I explain, "she's having a show in town in about a month, and..."

"Been there, done that!" says Strausbaugh again, as he continues to supply my nine-pound monster dog with treats that will make him puke a rainbow.

"Yeah, but..." I start to say.

"You can't convince me, Puss," he tells me, and asks what else I got.

"No really, I got a great idea!" I say.

"What is it?" asks Strausbaugh as someone from the art department walks in and shows him next week's cover. He tells them it's ugly.

"Well," I stutter.

"Out with it," he yells so loud even Scooter stops eating. For one second.

Feeling like Peter Parker, I tell my boss my idea.

I tell him I'll convince Ms. Plaster Caster to cast my dick and put it in the next show. Then my penis would be up there with the greats like Jimi Hendrix, Wayne Kramer, Noel Redding, and even those pussies Jello Biafra from The Dead Kennedys and Pete Shelley from The Buzzcocks.

"And I think she did Mick Jagger, too," I exclaim.

"And why would she cast your oversized clitoris?" asks Strausbaugh.

"'Cause we promise her the cover of the paper," I tell my boss.

Then John does something weird. Something I've never seen him do.

He leans back in his chair and thinks.

He doesn't yell; he doesn't dismiss it.

He doesn't even give into Scooter's begging for more treats.

"Your penis on the cover of The New York Press!" he says, more to himself than to me. "I like it!"

"Yeah?" I ask.

"Yeah," he says, "and what's more, advertising will hate it! Go for it, Puss!"

I ask him if I can borrow his phone, and he lets me.

One call to Ms. Plaster Caster's assistant, and fifty promises of a cover story later, she sets up an appointment for "my casting" in a week. But I do have to call her the next day for more details.

"You are amazing, Puss," says my boss.

In my best Han Solo voice, I reply, "I know!"

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That night I get home and tell my then-wife the good news.

"Guess what, honey," I say to her.

"You emptied the dishwasher?" she says, with her hands on her hips, elbows at 45 degrees.

"Better," I say.

"You made the bed?"

I tell her I got the cover of The New York Press in a few weeks.

"Are they going to pay you this time? she asks.

Ignoring her question, I tell her it's going to be great, and everyone in the whole world is going to see my penis, my big and wonderful penis, on the cover of a newspaper!

"Your what?" she screams.

Suddenly Scooter starts barking, which I find strange. He seemed to like the idea before. Maybe it was the yelling.

"Well," I explain, "not my actual penis — a casting of it. Cynthia Plaster Caster is going to do a cast of my pecker!"

"Over my dead body," says my then-wife, "and whose bright idea was this?"

I tell her it was mine, and mine alone. And that I'm a genius. That even Strausbaugh thinks so.

"You guys are always too plowed to know what's good," she tells me.

I explain to her the whole idea, how my penis will be as famous as Jimi Hendrix's and Mick Jagger's. How it will tour the world and be worshipped like a rock star.

"Well," she replies, "I guess you have to live vicariously through something."

"Then it's OK?" I ask her.

"Only if she doesn't touch what's already mine," she explains.

I tell her that she won't get anywhere near it, that only she, my wife, was allowed to touch it, and continue to lie until she grows bored. Then I empty the dishwasher. That makes her happy and she forgets the whole thing.

Phew.

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The next day I call Cynthia's assistant as promised. She explains to me that she wants a picture of my penis to make sure Cynthia will approve.

A few strokes, a digital camera, some email, and ten minutes later, I'm told I'm solid.

"So how is this going to work?" I ask the assistant, whose name I can't remember for the life of me. It must have been all the blood rushing south at the thought of *my* penis being the next big celebrity.

I could imagine it wearing a leather jacket, with big gold chains around its crown. Maybe with a few tattoos, and totally driving a fancy sports car. It would be the toast of the town. Get into clubs for free, and pick up the chicks like nobody's business.

Then I thought about how it might get such a huge ego it might want to be emancipated from me. After all, it did do all the work, and all I was was its life-support system. Perhaps it would find a new host. One that didn't mistreat it as much. One that didn't abuse it until it was red and raw.

"The way it goes," explains the assistant, snapping me out of my morbid visions, "is you come over to our studio, which is here in the city, and we cast it!"

"That's it?" I ask, confused and full of questions.

"Yeah," she explains, we mix up a batch of the casting material, then apply it, let it dry, and then cut if off and make the cast!"

Suddenly I feel my penis retract in horror beneath my sweatpants.

"How do I, um…" I say to the assistant.

"Don't worry, hon," she tells me in a deep, sexy voice, "I'll make sure it's just the way you and Cynthia want it the whole time."

Suddenly Godzilla wakes up in my sweats and the next thing I know I've got a pup-tent below my waist.

Scooter, who is a puppy at the time, see this, thinks it's a toy, and starts leaping at it to bite it.

With one hand over my privates, and the other on the telephone, the assistant and I set up a date.

I just hope I don't blow my load when I imagine that deep-sexy-voiced woman putting my monster in her mouth.

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"So," says my then-wife, later that day, "how's it working out with that cover story?"

Doh.

I thought she'd forget.

"Good," I tell her, I go in next week to have the cast made. They say it's just like getting a broken leg set, no big deal!"

"So you won't mind if I come along," she says, smiling.

"Umm," I stutter, "they really would rather have me there alone," I explain, "the room is very tiny and it's a very precise procedure."

"It's OK," she tells me, "I'll just wait right outside the door, and you know, peek in every once in a while."

"No, really," I try explaining as my face turns five different shades of red, "they want me there alone. Something about nondisclosures on intricate techniques, and legal issues regarding penile rights."

"Penile rights?" yells my wife.

"Yeah, I say, now having to stick to the stupid line I just fed her.

"And what exactly are penile rights?" she asks, foot tapping on the floor.

I try to explain in the best legalese I've heard on "Law & Order" that when one party makes a deal with a second party, the second party must honor the first party's request by presenting documents of ownership.

"Of your penis?" she yells.

Damn, she's listening.

So I do the next best thing I can think of, I start to load the dishwasher with the dirty dishes.

"That pan has grease on it, and it won't come off unless you scrub it," she yells at me.

I act dumb, and argue about the grease and the Lemon Joy, and seconds later, the previous conversation is history.

***

A few nights later I dream of my phallus next to Jimi Hendrix's and Mick Jagger's. I dream it's fifty feet tall, and all these naked women on a far-off tropical island are worshipping it while guys with spears stand around, stomping their sticks into the ground.

I wake up feeling wonderful.

And hard as a rock.

It was really going to happen.

My dick was going to a rock star. The Jimi Hendrix Experience, The Rolling Stones, and now, Furious George.

Fuck the rock 'n' roll hall of fame — this was ten times better.

Make that a million.

***

A day before the casting is to be done, I score some Viagra from my male model buddy who lives upstairs in my building. I figure I've never cheated on a test before in my life, but if I ever was going to start,

now was the time.

I wanted my cock so huge that Ms. Plaster Caster's assistant would choke on it, and Ms. Caster would fall to her knees and worship the ninth wonder of the world. Well, with Viagra, just about tenth.

They day couldn't pass fast enough, and I actually suppressed the urge to masturbate and only wanked it three times that day.

***

The next morning, while drinking my coffee and looking at porn on the net to get in shape like Rocky Balboa, the phone rings.

I wonder who could be calling me this day of infamy.

This day where I would be as famous as any rock star there ever was. The day Furious George would become a household name, and not just another punk band that played CBGB and The Continental on weekends. The day my penis would rise to the occasion and salute rock 'n' roll forever. The day my cannon would fire the 21-gun salute.

"Hello?" I say as I answer the phone.

"Hi, George?" asks this deep sexy voice, as I play with the Viagra pill next to my keyboard.

"Yup," I say, "Who's this and what can I do for you?"

The woman tells me her name — you know, Ms. Plaster Caster's assistant.

"I can't wait to see you guys," I tell her, feeling my pants start to tighten.

"That's what I'm calling about," she tells me.

I suddenly start to feel my heart fall into my socks. "What's wrong?" I ask.

"Well…" she says.

"But you told me Cynthia loves my cock, you told me!" I yell into the phone.

"Oh yes, it's very beautiful, even royal," she tells me.

"Well then you'll love it in person," I say, so loud that Scooter starts barking like crazy. Thank God the wife isn't around.

"I'm afraid I'm not going to have that chance," she tells me.

The fucking morning of the casting.

"But why?" I weep, feeling my fifteen minutes turn into fifteen seconds.

"Well…" the assistant starts out.

"You love my penis. I love my penis. Everyone loves my penis! What could possibly be wrong?" I say to her, begging for her not to say no.

"The problem is this…" the assistant says.

Now I prepare myself for anything. I tell myself no matter what she is about to say it can't hurt me. She can say that the plaster blaster's gone gay, she can say that my penis is too large to handle, she can say it's too *small* to handle. She can say anything. Anything except what comes out of her mouth next.

"Well the truth is Cynthia hates your music. Your band, Furious George," says the assistant.

"Huh?" I say, dumbfounded like I've never been before.

"Well Cynthia has to like the music of the musician she casts, and frankly, she thinks you guys suck. She just listened to your album and the whole thing is off."

I stutter and try to say something, anything at all, but all that comes out of my mouth is drool.

"Sorry about this, George. Maybe next time, when you learn to play your guitar and sing," she adds, then hangs up the phone.

***

After a deep depression, I crawl into my editor's office to tell him the news.

After finishing telling him the story, John just sits back in his chair and starts to laugh hysterically.

"You think this is funny?" I say, eyes wet and dreams fleeting.

"Are you kidding?" he asks me, "this is the most punk rock thing I've ever heard! Congratulations!"

I smile.

"You mean I got the cover story still?" I ask.

"Not on your life," he replies, and suddenly I find us both laughing.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

Got some cool CDs and heard some great bands lately. Check out Joey John from New York. He's on Myspace. Good songwriting and right on. Also, Rich White Kids are totally punk rock. And they have a Myspace page, too! Woo Hoo! Of course, The Blood Runners Myspace page is the best, but that's just me and the spirit of Stiv Bators taking. But really, the label Salem Ashtray put out the first Potato Famine record and it rocks my world. It's like The Dropkick Murphys if they were from Ireland via the west coast. This stuff is great. Real punk rock with a singer who is not afraid to sing! I can't say enough good stuff about these guys…so check them out on Myspace and get their first CD, guaranteed to be a collector's item! Punk rock!

My space is www.myspace.com /help-georgetabb

It seems like it must be spring cause there are lots of video games out. Some of them very good, like "Rainbow Six Vegas 2" where you get to shoot terrorists on and offline. This game comes in second to "Call Of Duty Four: Modern Warfare" for me. Good stuff. Great Stuff. Then there's "Condemned 2" from Sega. Scary-looking ghouls who look like homeless dudes killing each other with whatever they can find. Kinda goofy, really good for bad dreams. Also "Lego Stars Wars: The Complete Trilogy" from Lucas Arts for the Nintendo DS may be my favorite game on the system yet. Whoa! Also, I'm enjoying "Sega Bass Fishing" and "The Club" and "Burnout Paradise" a hell of a lot. Then there's stuff like "Dark Messiah: Might and Magic Elements" and "Viking: Battle For Asgard." Not only is this stuff too Dungeons and Dragons, it's boring. Wait…that's the same thing! Doh! Another not-so-hot title is "Need For Speed: Prostreet" for the PSP. Yawn. And this is a surprise 'cause usually *everything* from EA rocks my world. "Pinball Hall Of Fame: The Williams Collection:" for the Wii is wonderful. It even feels right with tiltable tables and such. Good for Crave Entertainment to put out a decent title! Oh yeah, and "Army Of Two," which was supposed to be great, ain't. It's fun for a rental, but don't buy it…save your money. The multiplayer sucks, but the game does look good! Next month, "Grand Theft Auto 4" I hope. And it's about time. I need to steal some cop cars, kill some hookers, run over some pedestrians and get up to a five star rating before taking out a stinger and shooting down a helicopter and blowing myself up as well! Yeah!

A special thanks to Shawni, Todd, and Mike Watt in California. You guys rock!

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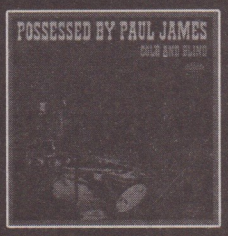

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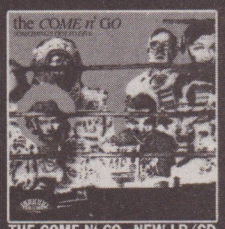

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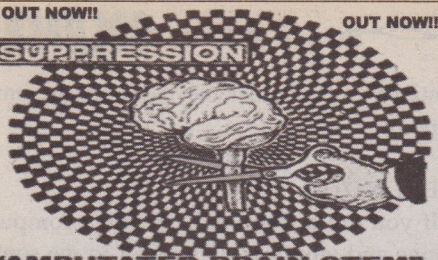

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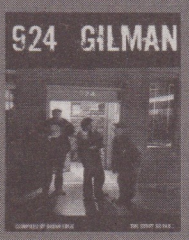
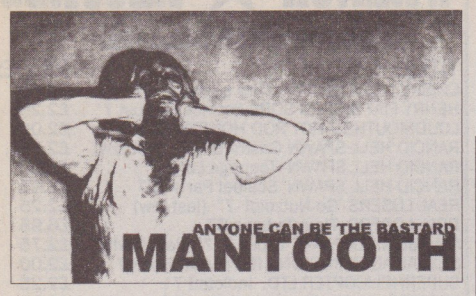


"Gilman changes people's lives. It gives them inspiration; it gives them hope. It's what holds some people together when life is tearing them apart. It shows them that there are things in the world to care about, to take responsibility for. It instills in them the sense that some things do matter, and perhaps most importantly, that they themselves matter, especially those who've been told they would never amount to anything. How does Gilman do this? Simply by providing an opportunity that people can run with, or not, as they choose to. It is, after all, only a building. But it's the people that take advantage of this opportunity that have made Gilman special, magical. These people are what this book is about." -- Brian E. '04 (excerpt from 924 Gilman book)



I am a simple man. I enjoy simple things because my simple brain cannot process complex pleasures. But as most of you may know, being simple is not all that easy. For instance, one day you may find yourself in front of a rack of magazines and, being that you are some manner of *punk*, you head for any semblance of *punk zines* that are for sale. Perhaps you'll find the newest issue of *Razorcake* and think to yourself, "Golly, I wonder what crazy fucking things Rev. Nørb has to say this month!?!" You begin flipping through and you notice the name "Ron Paul." Ron motherfucking Paul. Because you are simple and controlling your bowels when faced with even greater *simplicity* is essentially a complex process, you immediately shit your pants right there in the store. Except it's not really shit but more of a foam, kind of like an aerated mixture of brine shrimp. You are kicked out of the shop and left standing confused and simple on the sidewalk as passerby gawk and snicker at your foamy knickers. They're all probably thinking, "that poor idiot probably wants to write a response to that *Razorcake* column about Ron Paul but can't now because he can't go back into that store to get that issue with his shitty pants!" Well, a load of crap in my pants has never stopped me from being a reactionary before, so why stop now?

Now I could have completely imagined this column. If this is the case, I sincerely apologize to *Razorcake* and anyone reading this for such a waste of time. But of course it could be a waste of time regardless, which I'm sure THE DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH will undoubtedly accuse me of.

Anyhow, it's unfortunate that I don't have the issue in front of me because I can't quote from it, but it's also probably good because I would end up reprinting the whole fucking thing just to see if bologna can actually be substituted for ink. BAM! All I can tell you now is that is was roughly 500 words of the same slimy rhetoric Ron Paul Handjobbers across the nation use to illicit word-ejaculate from this giant (although comparatively short) politico-penis. SLAM! It contains only vague accusations and biblical predictions that may or may not have been plagiarized from the novel *Dune*. RON PAUL IS THE KWISATCH HADERACH. HE HAS TASTED THE SPICE AND WE SHALL OVERTHROW HARKONNEN AND HIS EVIL INCOME TAX.

Being that I am a seasoned journalist, I have uncovered some startling facts about Ron Paul that you may not know. 1) Ron Paul is white. 2) Ron Paul is rich. 3) Ron Paul is a douchebag politician. My enemies will be quick to point out that these facts can be applied to any person orbiting through the American political omniverse. So what makes King Shit any different than the rest? Why do his followers insist that his Myspace page is a reliable indicator of how many *billions* of "friends" he has, not just in the US, but on the entire planet of Arrakis?

Using my powers of deduction I have surmised that the "Ron Paul Revolution" is actually a big huge stinking conspiracy. And I'm about the blow the whole fucking lid off the damn thing in a very Ace Ventura Pet Detective kind of way. Remember towards the end when Ace suddenly realizes that Einhorn is Finkle/Finkle is Einhorn? What we have here is a similar situation. I'm not saying that Ron Paul is actually a schizophrenic/murderous ex-pro football player, although we certainly shouldn't rule out all possibilities.

Think to yourselves for once in your pathetic lives — which perpetual candidate for president has been strangely absent from this election? Who commands an exaggerated army/cult of young people to blanket college campuses? The answer is that irrepressible anti-Semite, LYNDON LAROUCHE. LaRouche is Paul/Paul is LaRouche. Paul is simply LaRouche incognito, undoubtedly hijacking Reptoid facemask technology. Where else could he have conjured an equally brainwashed group of dolts? The answer is that they are the same brainwashed group of dolts. After all, there has to be a plateau in the US political arena for self-righteous jingoists with thousand-yard stares — one must recycle them at some point.

ENDNOTES:
If you are a Ron Paul obsessive-compulsive and would like to parrot to me some vague bullshit about Ron Paul, Ron Paul, Ron Paul, and Ron Paul, you can email me: gregory .mantooth @gmail.com

March 25, 2008. Monday.
Tennessee.

Midnight, and the coyotes are howling. The wind blows up the hill, and from the attic room at the top of the house I can hear the wooden shutters, heavy and solid, banging against the porch railing despite the ropes I tied to them this afternoon.

It is hard to believe I have been in Tennessee now for twenty days. I have arrived in the very beginning of spring, when the season is still entwined with the last gasps of winter.

My travels, which began almost exactly a year ago, have surrounded me like a rising river after a heavy rain. I have followed my heart and the course, letting go of what was once clear and solid–a room, rent, a job, routine and structure.

I didn't expect all this. It was temporary. I quit my job and headed east, planning a three-month video tour, interviewing bands and squatters and anarchist organizers, visiting old friends, going to Europe. Now, all these months later, I am still in motion, not settled anywhere. Sometimes, not knowing what comes next is tiring and stressful. But mostly, I feel alive, and the world is full of possibilities.

I am between travels, finding a place with family in Tennessee, staying in a wooden house in the countryside surrounded by fields and trees. I breathe deeply and experience nights with stars, the dramatic absence of the noise of a city.

Not working for someone else, my time is mine, an interesting feeling of freedom. I am finally able to collect my video footage and set to work on editing, an attempt to finish projects and dreams. I feel lucky to have this space and time, for once to be out of the daily grind.

In Tennessee, I am also growing more peaceful. Confronting my past and my history. Discovering how my mother has healed and become more calm, happy, and vibrant. It is a good time to be here.

I helped plant a crabapple tree in the yard yesterday, digging a deep hole through the hard clay soil, shoveling up large rocks, putting my labor into the ground for the first time in seasons. I had the satisfaction of looking forward to seeing this tree years from now, large and sturdy, and remembering this spring. In the cold, I also planted onions in the garden, enough to last us all summer. The tomatoes, broccoli and other veggies will have to wait until after the last frost date, a couple of weeks from now.

In the past week, I have not only planted seeds, but have held death in my hands. I pulled the trigger of a .45 pistol, smelled smoke and heard the shots go off, aiming at a paper target in a field.

My uncle is an ex-Marine, and we've never agreed on anything. But when I told him a month ago I'd like to learn how to shoot a gun, he was happy to teach me. As guns have threatened my life before, and have killed people I know, I wanted, if nothing else, to be able to understand how they work.

On Easter, I went to my uncle and aunt's house for a family dinner. My cousin's kids had an egg hunt, and ran around the yard yelling and looking in bushes and trees, searching for the colored plastic eggs with chocolate inside. My 94-year-old grandmother held my hand, and my aunt's dogs ran after the kids. It was one of those ridiculously wholesome American family moments right out of a Hallmark ad, the sun shining and the grass all new and green, everyone smiling and laughing.

Then, as often happens with my family, the odd twist came, surprising me once again. After the eggs were all collected, the kids eating their candy, my uncle walked over to me and said, "Erika, now we're going shooting."

"OK," I said, thinking I didn't have much choice in the matter. And besides, why would I turn this opportunity down? We walked together to a field behind his house, brown cotton plants across the fence. My uncle was carrying a metal box with his pistols, and had earlier set up paper targets and a table, making a home-made shooting range. He showed me how to clasp my hands, how to stand, how to take the safety on and off, how to tell if the gun was loaded. Holding the heavy .45 pistol in my hand, I couldn't help but think of my father's murder, the 16-year-old girl who was shot in my neighborhood in San Francisco in a driveby, the conflicts and wars, and how damn *easy* it is to just pull the trigger and snuff out another's life. A pistol, a device invented to kill other humans, was in my hands.

I was surprised by the gun's heavy recoil, how much strength it took to keep my hands steady. It was much harder to aim it than it is in the movies. It was all too real. It was also a bit surreal, wearing ear protection from the loud shots, the sounds of the world and my uncle's instructions muted. Before I squeezed the trigger, staring down the barrel, lining up the sights, I could hear my breath inside my head and feel my heart pounding in my chest. I tried to breathe steady, to let go of all those thoughts of death. I aimed again, four more shots, and finished off the clip.

Today was surprisingly cold. It is only a few days before I leave again, this time back to the west coast, another tour on the horizon.

When I opened the front door this morning, I went back for my hat and gloves before taking the two dogs out for a walk. My right foot hurt again, a sharp pain at the bottom of my heel. It has been months since the injury, and the pain comes and goes. The tendon that connects my toes to the heel is swollen and weak, too many years and miles of boots walking on concrete. But it always feels better to have a walk rather than not, and the dogs looked at me with excited eyes, wagging their tails, ready to see the day.

We set off down the hill, following a winding gravel road with ditches on either side to catch the rain. Leaving the road we headed up another hill, a field that has been for sale for years, with no houses yet built on it, and no one around to mind me walking around through the tall grass and brambles looking for signs of spring. We crossed over a little stream, the dogs lapping up the water and splashing around in the mud. On the other side of the field we walked past a fence and line of trees, on the other side a herd of black cows grazed and looked at the three of us, mooing at us to not bother them or their young calves. We crossed the gravel road again, past a small pond that is full of frog song and algae when it is warm, and becomes a puddle when it is hot and dry. The frogs were quiet today, the pond still in the cold, and the algae retreated to the shallow edges.

By the end of our hike I had warmed up, but I saw snowflakes falling out of a cloudy sky. At the same time, I was gathering daffodils, a whole armload picked from the yard. The dogs were happy to be outside and running, Jackie sniffing the trail ahead and Dixie running along with a big smile on her face.

The sun sets behind the hills, and the trees show only a slight tinge of red, as the buds have not yet sprouted leaves. Walking in the fields, remembering my childhood, I replace old terrors and memories with new events. I have finally escaped my past, and have now returned. The graves of monsters, once fresh, are now covered in weeds.

Channel Zero DVD

Speaking of finishing projects, CHANNEL ZERO is now on DVD! So here's a big advert for something I'm excited about, and has taken ages for me to get together. In case I haven't mentioned it recently, *Channel Zero* was a cable access television show that I started in San Francisco in September 2006. In eight months I produced four episodes, the first three shot in the Access SF studio on Market Street with a full-on volunteer crew of about eight people running television cameras, a sound board, switcher, roll-ins, directing shots and setting lights. The fourth episode is shot on location around San Francisco, Berkeley and Oakland. Basically, the show is a half hour long, with me playing the TV host, introducing video footage and interviewing guests in the studio.

I have a German friend who didn't like the format, perhaps preferring a more traditional documentary style without the

introductions, but I don't think he quite got the humor of having your own American television show. *Channel Zero*, through channel 29 in San Francisco, was actually broadcast to over 180,000 homes, several times a week while it was on the air. There is no way of knowing how many people actually watched the show, but studies have shown that people actually do watch cable access, simply because they are flipping through the channels and something catches their eye.

For good reason, radicals don't trust television, as it is a medium controlled by corporations, designed for advertising and supporting the status quo. *The revolution will not be televised.* But rather than ignore television's impact on society, and the billions of hours Americans spend in front of their television sets, I believe cable access in the US can be a prime propaganda and grassroots media opportunity. Cable access shows are cheap and affordable to produce, and the potential outreach is enormous.

I enjoy the thought of sneaking people's living rooms with something new. With *Channel Zero* I hoped to expose unsuspecting folks to DIY punk shows and anarchist ideas in a fun and entertaining way. Also, now I've got a great collection of some of my favorite bands, and interviews with people working on inspiring projects in both the US and Europe, and can share that footage on the internet and also now on DVD. As I had access to good equipment at the cable access station, and wanted the show to be accessible, I made the show as professionally looking as I could, but still fucking punk. At least that's what I was going for. I had external mics for most of the shows featured, so the sound is pretty good. Check it out and let me know what you think!

There are four episodes, plus loads of bonus footage, on two DVDs. So here's some details to inspire you to get it straight away. The bands include: The Subhumans (playing at AJZ Bielefeld), Imperial Leather (at Gilman Street), Sahn Maru (at the Metro, Oakland), Behind Enemy Lines (at the Be-Part Festival in Stuttgart, Germany 2005), The Restarts (Okupational Hazard festival 2005 in London), Vitamin X (CBGBs), Citizen Fish (ABC NoRio), To What End? (in Uppsala, Sweden), Signal Lost (Friesen, Bremen, Germany), Peligro Social (Balazoo, SF), Surrender (Murder Dubbs, Oakland), Ballast (Boston Basement), Annihilation Time (Haz-Mat, Oakland) and Caustic Christ (in Burnt Ramen, Richmond).

Interviews are with: Ramsey Kanaan (founder of AK Press), Golnar Nikpour (coordinator of *Maximum Rocknroll*), Wendy-o Matik (poet, punk, performance artist and author), women at the Folsom BDSM Street Fair in San Francisco (celebrating radical sex), the Friesen Crew Collective (in Bremen, Germany), 56@ Infoshop (in London), and a walking tour around London looking at Banksy pieces and other street art with Martin Bull. Bonus footage includes interviews with groups at the 2006 Bay Area Anarchist Bookfair in SF such as 1984 Printing, Crimethinc., Berkeley Free Radio, *Z Magazine*, and Ward Churchill's speech. I've also thrown in a few more bands.

If ya want a copy, email me for more details: e_bitchcrew@yahoo.com with the subject "Channel Zero" in the header so I don't think its spam. I don't have a steady address or PO Box at the moment, so I hesitate to put one here.

Next month, back on th' road! Thanks for reading this column, and supporting *MRR*. Cheers and solidarity, Erika.

don't try

by dave

In March I ventured away from the colorless rain-soaked forests of Olympia for a week to visit my favorite southern city — Austin, Texas. Weather-wise, the differences were pretty major with Austin already having temps well into the eighties. As many of you are aware, this time of year is a good time to hit Austin due to the many hundreds of shows happening as part of, and around, the South By Southwest music showcases. I saw many great shows despite not having the required SXSW (as it's abbreviated) wristband to get into the official shows. Some of the surrounding shows are arguably better and attract many of the same bands anyway.

I spent a lot of time at a place called the Typewriter Museum where there are two days worth of shows called Fuck By Fuck You and Fuck By Fuck Y'all, set up by the guys who run the Australian Cattle God label. One day the bands fall more into the category of country, Americana, roots-style bands, and then one day it's punk, rock, and metal bands.

Both shows had many amazing bands. A few who particularly stood out were Lozen, all the way from Tacoma, Washington and This Is My Condition, from Lawrence, Kansas. Lozen is a two-piece playing a noisy, driving rock not unlike the Melvins. Great songs and presence from those ladies. They have a CD our already on Australian Cattle God and should have new material later this year. Look forward to seeing more of them at home in the Northwest.

This Is My Condition is a one-man band, a guy called Craig Comstock. Craig sets up a drum kit and then straddles a guitar across his snare and floor tom, and then unleashes the fury on both with the sticks. Miraculously, not only can he pull this off, but the songs are all rad heavy noise rock that could easily pass for a full band if you weren't watching him. But watching this dude play is half the fun. Needs to be seen to be believed.

A show was set up in the supposedly shitty part of town at a bar whose name escapes me now. This bar has a large "backyard" and out there was a show that included Sex Vid, Iron Lung, Annihilation Time, and Municipal Waste. You can't really ask for more than that.

Unfortunately we lagged in getting over there and Sex Vid had already done their thing. Iron Lung hit the stage and ruled for the entire duration of their epic seven-minute set. I think cops showed up and tried to shut the show down. Iron Lung got off the stage. I don't know what happened in the interim but Muni Waste set up about 20 minutes later and ripped into their set.

Municipal Waste is kind of a phenomenon. They are obviously the big dogs of the whole thrash revival thing. The kids absolutely go ape shit bananas when they play. Some shirtless fat dude exits the circle pit, comes over to where I'm standing, picks up a garbage can full of empty bot-

tles and cans, returns to the circle pit, and tosses it all over the place, only slightly raising an eyebrow by the other initiates. I don't know whether to laugh or cry. I don't know the band's material well enough to point out certain tunes but it appears all the "hits" are aired and a particularly violent response is received upon the repeated chorus of "Municipal Waste Is Gonna Fuck YOU UP!" Great set, boys.

But for my money (even though it was free) the night belonged to Oakland's heroes Annihilation Time who have perfected the twin-guitar NWOBHM meets SoCal hardcore sound they've been honing these last few years. New tracks played gave a taste of the forthcoming Tee Pee Records LP and the kids seemed to go almost as bonkers as they did for the Waste. Seems the larger metal and punk world will soon discover what many in the underground have known for some time, Annihilation Time are kings.

Over at Beerland the next night, Iron Lung and A.T. ripped through destructive sets again, along with Brutal Knights and the Marked Men. Closing the show out that night was Easy Action, the latest incarnation of hardcore's greatest vocalist of all-time, John Fucking Brannon. The crowd thinned out during this set, but Easy Action has the class of a band that's been around. Brannon's vocals are still raw as shit and the band tore through songs both old and new of their filthy Detroit punk blues. More people should love this band.

During flights and layovers I had ample time to digest some of the shit I received in the mail over the last several weeks. First up, Cursed is a Canadian band whose latest album is titled simply *Three*. This was my first exposure to the band and it was a positive experience. An intro, "Architects Of Troubled Sleep" comprised of overlapping spoken samples and menacing noise, blasts into "Night Terrors," a grind-influenced maelstrom of anger. From there Cursed distill their sonic brew with crust, grind, metallic hardcore and some Swedish hardcore. Sometimes within the confines of a single song. Songs vary in length, with most sticking below three minutes and that's where Cursed are at their best — the short, sharp shock. The cover art on the CD looks eerily similar to Kylesa's second LP and it's not hard to imagine those two bands on tour together. Trap Them, Himsa and bands of that ilk seem a logical reference. Released by Canadian label Goodfellow Records.

Dudes! The Birkenstock-wearing hesher punks at Oakland's Tank Crimes have bestowed upon our unworthy ears one of the best records of this young year. The new LP from Population Reduction *Each Birth A New Disaster* is a fuckin' masterpiece! Total hardcore thrash grindin' weed-fuelled brilliance. Not one wasted riff on the whole record. If bands like Insect Warfare, Hatred Surge and Magrudergrind are doing it for you these days, do yourselves a favor and pick up this LP, it's right up there with the best in the muthafuckin' game. Sweet gatefold LP and total maniac artwork by Becky Cloonan. The song titles and lyrics are pure comedy, like "Schnauzer Autopsy" "Road Rage At The Farmers Market" and "Black Metal Beach Party." Folks, it don't get better than this. Go to it!

Lethe is a five-piece from Lawrence, Kansas with a new three-track demo in circulation. The band just completed a Midwest tour with Samothrace with whom they share a member, the bedread-locked six-string low ender Dylan Desmond. Nearly a half hour of music in these three tracks of all instrumental post-metal progressive doom rock. These guys are musicians. Three damn guitars and a six-string bass. I hear small doses of Floyd and Rush style influence mixed in with the heavier stuff. Musician types like this can often disappear up their own asses, but Lethe stick to the theme and keep the song at the forefront rather than their own wanking. I liked this a lot more than I thought I would. I shoulda known it'd be great with Dylan the Dude involved. Anyone into stuff as far ranging as Stinking Lizaveta to Red Sparrowes will probably get into this. See for yourself myspace.com/ lethecult.

Punks who allow some black metal meat in their vegan diets will most certainly enjoy *Just Fuck Off* a CD from Canadian solo black metal unit Malveillance. This is raw-stripped and fairly one-dimensional d-beat style blackness with lo-fi recording and no-fi attitude. Just face-ripping Bathory meets Discharge damaged dementia. Bone Awl, Order Of The Vulture and early Impaled Nazarene would all make good reference points. Available from New Scream Industry, newscreamindustry.blogspot.com.

Also out on New Scream Industry is a split release between long-running SF Bass destroyers Burmese and Cadaver Eyes. Both bands mix up harsh power electronics with guitar bass destruction like a collision between Whitehouse, Man Is The Bastard, Lightning Bolt and some goregrind. Tough on the ears and the nerves. Just the way I like it.

Tractor is a UK band with a new three-song demo, *Cattle*. Influenced by Godflesh and all things AmRep, what they're doing isn't new, but they're doing it with effectiveness. The drummer Kunal runs the Superfi label. Check them out at superfirecords.com /tractor.

I had somewhat high hopes for Animus Mortis seeing that they are from Chile. The South American maniacs almost always come with something different, but raw and ugly and truer than most of their Northern hemisphere brethren. Not the case here. *Atrabilis (Residues From Verb & Flesh)* is too overtly European to really set it apart, and as such is a fairly by the numbers deal. The production is good, the speed is there, the acidic vocals, tons of double kicks, but ultimately this just sounds like Glorior Belli, Mortuus and other such second tier bands. Not bad, but there's just way too much shit like this circulating right now. This is what the N.E.D. label has spawned. Released by Debemur Morti Productions.

Power Quest plays power metal, not surprisingly. Every once in a while I'll get into a power metal album — you know, shit like Blind Guardian. I love me some Blind Guardian. But that band at least has some balls in their sound and a lot of thrashiness to go with their epic tales of *Lord of the Rings*-style nerdness. Sadly, Power Quest don't deliver on that front. They sound like a weaker version of Hammerfall (who's first few LPs I am into), or maybe a faster version of Europe if they played way too much Nintendo (big perm keyboard alert). The album is called Master Of Illusion, on the Napalm label. One for the white frilly shirt crowd. Otherwise avoid.

Clutch, Crowbar, High On Fire,

Mastodon, Akimbo and even Neurosis are all digested and regurgitated on the latest album from Taint, *Secrets And Lies*. Every song has many riffs, time changes and tons of highly charged rock aggression. Big-ass production, including a loud mix by Alex Newport of Fudge Tunnel. I haven't heard the first album by Taint but was led to believe it was more of a doom record. Those elements are definitely present here like on "Goddamn This City" but ultimately this record is aiming for a shot toward the more mainstream metal sounds of the aforementioned bands. Not my style so much but a lot of people will get into this kind of thing. Sounds like it should be on Relapse, but it's released by Candlelight in North America and Rise Above in Europe. I do like the Napalm tribute title of low-key album closer "Mass Appeal Sadness."

Despite the shitty name, Brown Jenkins' latest recording *Angel Eyes* is actually a really great mix of sounds with a blackened foundation. Take the hypnotic meanderings of Burzum, Thorns, and Ved Beuns Ende, then add some less obvious Justin Broadrick sounds and you have Brown Jenkins. All the tracks sort of blend together into a seamless whole with a cumulative effect of lulling the listener into a hazy narcotic nightmare. Interesting stuff.

It's worth mentioning that Southern Lord has reissued the Lurker Of Chalice CD as a digipak and included the bonus track that was originally on the vinyl version. For those that don't remember, Lurker is the other band of Wrest from Leviathan, and is as good, maybe even better. The CD comes in anticipation of Lurker's long awaited follow up later this year *Perverse Calculus*.

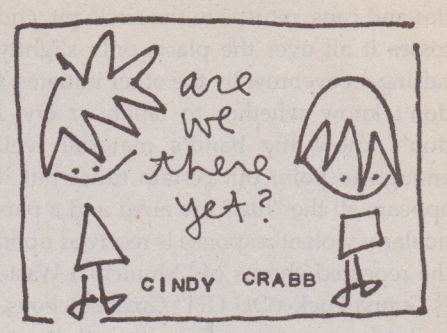
In light of all the thrash hype it behooves us to look at one of the all-time best thrash records ever, yet one that seems to get overlooked when talk of all the greats ensues. That is *Eternal Nightmare* by the Bay Area's own Violence. Released in 1988 this album came a little late in the game which may be one reason it gets overlooked, but make no mistake this is in the top ten thrash records of all time, posers. Every song is packed with riffs that are both aggressive and unforgettable. Sean Killian's vocals take a little getting used to. Not as aggressive as Paul Baloff or early James Hetfield, he's more of a singer, but has a good command of his voice giving a full range of personalities within the songs.

Although the first side is all hits, like "Serial Killer," "Phonophobia," and the title track, it's really the second side for me, only three tracks, that really elevates the album into the thrash metal Valhalla. It starts with "T.D.S. Take It As You Will" and then leads into one of the all-time great mosh classics "Bodies On Bodies" which twists and turns with precision and around the two-minute mark breaks into a monster mosh gallop. The mob chorus of "Bodies On Bodies" evokes visions of hundreds of thrashin' maniacs piling on top of each other to get to the stage. Nearly five minutes into the song, it reaches its frenzied peak once again for another round of violence. Municipal Waste, if you're reading, *covers this song*.

Another piece of thrashtastic mayhem closes the LP *Kill On Command*. It's full speed ahead until about three minutes in and then it gets to the mid-paced mosh break and Sean Killian's cry of "money, money, money, money, MONEY!" I recall spending a night of drunken mayhem thrashin' around the warehouse of my old job with a few friends and causing utter damage while listening to this record. Seriously, folks, this ranks right alongside *Kill Em All, Bonded By Blood, The Legacy* as one of thrash's crowning jewels. I found a copy of the vinyl at Rasputin's a few years back for $3 and recently Megaforce reissued the album with a bonus CD of a full live set. Track it down chump!

OK, folks, that's all the energy I have for you this time around. I've got a busy weekend coming up, with shows on Friday, Saturday and Sunday of all shades and colors. Friday it's Reuben's other band Gun Outfit, Saturday it's Wolves In The Throne Room at Hall Of The Woods, and then Sunday it's Yellow Swans and Sissy Spacek at The Phoenix House. Busy times. Seems like in Olympia good shit happens packed together, and then nothing for a while.

You can find the old columns at dontfuckingtry.blogspot.com. Don't Try, 120 State Ave. NE #136, Oly, WA 98501 USA, donttry@20buckspin.com



Why I'm Still an Anarchist

I've known a lot of people who have come to anarchism through a sort of reactionary thinking, which makes sense because there's a fuck of a lot to react against. And a lot of people came to anarchism focused on protest or ways of living their personal lives. And a lot of people, as they get older and maybe can't sustain the anger as much, and they aren't surprised by every new thing, and their old dogmas seem too limiting, they start to get resigned and they can't find a clear path forward within anarchism. I came to anarchism from an anarchist tradition that has a million ways you can be engaged in the world and in social change and still hold true. It's an anarchist tradition that believes in the amazingness of civilization and also that the roots of a world worth living in lay in the patterns of nature.

One of the things that makes social ecology different from liberal ecology is that liberal ecology thinks that we can somehow fix things with math. Like carbon credits and alternative fuel and changing your light bulb and recycling, and it doesn't look at the problems of the whole structure of society. It doesn't face the reality that the whole framework has to go.

One of the things that makes social ecology different from other radical ecological movements is that most of them believe that everything started to go to hell when man started dominating nature—like with agriculture. Which pretty much leads to the conclusion that the only way to get out of this nightmare world is to return to a pre-agriculture way of life. Social ecologists believe that the domination of nature stems from the domination of man over man, and the only way to solve the ecological crisis is to solve the social crisis.

So what that means is that it's not "humans" that are the cause of the problems, it is particular social relationships and institutions. It is not technology or cities themselves that are fucking everything up, it's what the power structures value—an economy of "grow or die," a view of the natural world as something to exploit, a belief structure that sees whole populations of people as less than human, an ethics based on domination and exploitation, and manipulating nearly everyone into giving up.

But that is not us. It is not what humanity is. What social ecology means is that we are amazing creatures, with unique human abilities, including the ability to use logic and self-reflection and ethics to create societies that don't totally suck. And that these societies will look like nothing we have seen before. We are capable of creating a new world, and of learning from the past.

Social ecologist get a pretty bad rap because a lot of them are fucking egotistical intellectuals without much of a clue about the real world. I don't know what it is about theory that sometimes leads to this unfortunate situation, which then leads to a backlash against intellectualism, which also sucks.

When I was between 19 and 21 I worked at the Institute for Social Ecology, and sometimes these theory boys (they were almost always boys) would come and write down every word Murray Bookchin (the founder of Social Ecology) said. We made fun of the theory boys. They looked up to him like little acolytes, but they didn't even seem to hear his jokes. And every great philosopher is also a person, with problems and failings.

I loved Murray. He was in his sixties then, and not as bitter as he would later become. The Murray I knew was an amazing teacher and visionary. His written language was dense, but that's because he loved the language and the complexities of it, which I learned to love too—once I learned to read it. But he spoke of history like he was right there in it, and his love of humanity, his love of society, was intense. One of my favorite days he was talking about social structure, about anthropology, about the destruction of the extended family and the destruction of geographically based community, and about elephants, about their death rituals. He looked with his clear blue eyes, up to the ceiling and let out a big sigh. He said "Oh, I would love for you all to study the modern pachyderm." His depth of knowledge was inspiring and he made me want to know it all. He pushed us to know it, to commit ourselves to our revolutionary responsibility.

It was our responsibility to become clearheaded, so we wouldn't be washed out with every coming tide. It was our responsibility to work towards a new world in whatever arena we entered—whether it was becoming an educator, inside the schools or outside of them; working toward a community based agriculture that was feeding back to the land what we took out of it; becoming a community organizer and creating direct democratic forms of decision making; or fighting in the streets. We have to have a wide vision, not just action for action's sake. We have to learn to self-educate and talk politics, and experiment and prepare ourselves for failure, learning from it.

Murray's main focus in his later years was on libertarian municipalism, and he started focusing on that to the exclusion of everything else. He could see how the smaller projects had become co-opted and how quickly the environmental movement had lost almost all of its revolutionary potential.

"The overriding problem is to change the structure of society so that people gain power. The best arena to do that is the municipality — the city, town, and village — where we have an opportunity to create a face-to-face democracy. We can transform local government into popular assemblies where people can discuss and make decisions about the economy and society in which they live. When we get power at the neighborhood level in a town or city, we can confederate all the assemblies and then confederate those towns and cities into a popular government — not a state (which is an instrument of class rule and exploitation), but a government, where the people have the power. This is what I call communalism in a practical sense. It should not be confused with communitarianism, which refers to small initiatory projects like a "people's" food cooperative, garage, printing press — projects that often become capitalistic when they don't fall apart or succumb to competition by other enterprises.

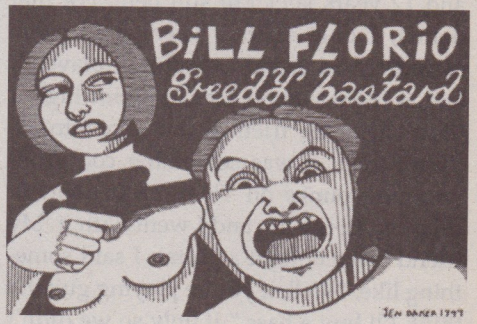
People will never achieve this kind of face-to-face democratic society spontaneously. A serious, committed movement is necessary to fight for it. And to build that movement, radical leftists need to develop an organization — one that is controlled from the base, so that we don't produce another Bolshevik Party. It has to be formed slowly on a local basis, it has to be confederally organized, and together with popular assemblies, it will build up an opposition to the existing power, the state and class rule. I call this approach libertarian municipalism."

—M. Bookchin. interview at www.socialecology.org/harbinger/vol2no1/bookchin_2.html

I think he's probably right, that this is probably the best way to create widespread social change, but also, I don't want to do that at all. It seems like a project that is meant for people who are from somewhere and stayed there and have roots and connections, which I'd like to have someday. But for most of us, we had to flee the stifling confines of our little shitty homes. We had to get the hell out, in order to flourish and survive. I think working toward social change is part of what makes us human, and we need to regain our humanity.

One of the weird things I love about social ecology is the science around it; a view of evolution as a movement toward ever greater complexity and increasing subjectivity. It focuses on what our potentiality is; what is possible for humans to become — our potentials for reason and care and sympathy, our constant striving for self-consciousness and freedom.

Recommended book: *Remaking Society*, by Murray Bookchin.



I was recently asked to come up with a plan for the next year, to set goals and

aims and all that sort of bullshit. I sat there looking at a blank sheet of paper for a while and realized that, one, no one has ever asked me to do such a thing before, and two, I never felt a need to do something like cook up a plan for something. Everything I've done in my life has sort of just fallen upon me and it seems my own nature seems to pick things at random and go for them without any sort of proper planning or care.

If you look at a typical childhood you will probably see a pattern. Say, Joey Umbatz, his dad buys him a baseball glove and some toy cars when he's five, his mom signs him up for piano lessons, his guidance counselor in high school tells him he can get a good scholarship to the auto mechanics college of greater Long Island. Joey excels at radiator repair and spends the next 40 years working on cars and listening to Billy Joel and ball games on his walkman. Planning: steps are taken, goals are met.

I dunno — my dad was a plumber, talked about how he hated his job every day. My mom took me to the library every week. I got a job fixing projectors and computers when I was 13. Some dude asked me to hold the spotlight at people's weddings while he shot videos, half a lifetime later; I'm still doing wedding videos. I went to three different colleges, really had no clue why and only got a degree because it was easy enough to do so just to say I was finished finally. No planning. Some kid asks me to help him sell zines, he ends up quitting the idea of doing a zine three weeks later, it's half a lifetime later and I'm still writing crap in a zine. Did I ever say, oh, I want to be some sort of journalist? No. Did I ever say, "Oh *MRR*, I'd like to write for that one day!" No, someone asked me to write jokes in it and 12 years later I'm still here. For that matter, I only started listening to punk because I had insomnia and they played it late at night when I was in junior high. I didn't have any friends who were into it, I didn't think it was something cool from watching punks on TV — it just sort of dropped in my life and I went with it. My friend Mike bought a guitar; I said something like, "Well, if you're playing guitar, I think I'll buy a bass," if only so we didn't exactly mimic *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*. Mike never successfully formed a band; I think I'm on my fifth. I never took any music lessons before or after buying the bass.

My girlfriend commented on the books I read last year. She was asking me why the hell I read them. These books have absolutely nothing in common and nobody recommended them to me. *All Marketers Are Liars, Donnie Brasco, The Great Bridge, The Exorcist, Without Reservation, Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of The Hip Hop Generation, Stranger in a Strange Land, The Real Animal House, The Godfather Returns, How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization, Cooked , Hoover's FBI, The Big Oyster, Strange Angel: The Otherworldly Life of Rocket Scientist John Whiteside Parsons* (actually this was given to me by someone who was like, you're the only person who'd seem like they'd wanna read this), *Notorious C.O.P., The Demon Under The Microscope, Basilica, Break Through: From the Death of Environmentalism to the Politics of Possibility,* add to this about 30 crime fiction novels from the 1960s and '80s. There's no rhyme or reason to this list, I didn't listen to Leonard Lopate every day and think, "Hey, that sounds interesting." I just picked up shit at random and got the most out of it.

The funny thing is, people come to me for advice on how they should plan their future. I can't with any sort of feeling of responsibility condone this sort of behavior. Since I was 15 people have asked me what my goals in life are and I gave them something like, "I never want to have to wear shoes on a daily basis." As far as I'm concerned, I've never had a real job interview. A few years ago I was at a meeting of local video guys and one of them brought up that a day camp in the area needed a film teacher. I called inquiring about the job and after talking to me for five minutes they said, "Well, can you commit to this summer right now?" My video editing job interview went something like "Can you use these machines? Can you start right now?" In fact I got this job because the person before me impregnated the 20-years-older-than-him part-time film transfer person. I just happened to call and ask if they needed help the week the dude left town.

One night at like 3 a.m. I thought it would be funny to start a theme band where I celebrated being in my high school. I sent an email to someone and four years later I'm still doing it, pretty much with the exact same four sentences I wrote down that night. I dunno, does this count as a real strategy plan? Maybe I'm really good at planning when the outcome only has to amount to silly and/or annoying results.

I think a lot of people probably follow this philosophy and end up working in some comic book warehouse, filling envelopes or sweeping up bars and cleaning puked-up toilets every morning. I somehow always seem to pull a decent salary and do all the things I want to do. I just don't really know what those things are until I'm already doing them.

So anyway: go to college, get a Master's, make a bunch of money, don't overdo it with the drinking and drugs, don't get married and lose half of everything in a divorce, don't have kids who will end up not planning anything and beg for money when they lose that comic-book sorting job because they stole Batman Number One, wear uncomfortable shoes, buy low sell high and all that, and just leave me alone.

If you need any more advice just email me at bill@candids.com

I apologize if I sound a bit exhausted this time around, I just got finished cleaning out old *Mangelslakt* HQ, and I'm trying to get some semblance of order around here. My office is a frickin' swamp right now of zines, records, comics, bills, paperwork, and so forth. I will be the cool guy and admit it was the upcoming tax deadline that lit the fire under my ass.

While I doubt anybody likes paying taxes, it is especially hard to do it knowing full well you are funding a more wide scale war of aggression with Iraq, and so forth. Some people especially punks may

be able to avoid paying taxes or if not, frequently be in a position to get a refund, which is pretty hard to resist. If you work in an official job—not paid under the table—then why not see what you can get from them, if anything. I'm not an anarchist, so I am not opposed to taxation in a philosophical sense, I am mainly concerned about where the money goes.

So I have gotten quite a few things for review lately, which is nice! Not all of it is WWHC, but many of the bands and labels have had involvement in the WWHC scene so that is something definitely worth supporting!

MEHKAHO NT is a Miami band that plays a quite appealing style that mixes old USHC with grind core, and reminds me in areas of MONSTER X, with those gut churning muffled vocals that are so awesome. My favorite style of vocals are really gruff and gritty like that, so this was right on the money. The recording is muddy and raw, but you can hear everything distinctly. It is atmospheric in a MISERY kind of way where the recording is intentionally distorted. MEHKAGO NT has a CD with five tracks and then a 7" called *Human Extinction*. Support the 305 death squad! Trick daddy approved, I am told (whatever that means!). Both are split record label releases and you can get more information at www,mehkagont.com.

Bacon Towne Records, www.upthefuckingpigs.com, sent me a couple of their fine releases. Notably an Os Mantikos 7". OS MANTIKOS is a thrash band from Malaysia, which I have already ranted and raved about in these fine pages. CHOOSE YOUR POISON is a pretty rockin' hardcore thrash act from Appleton, Wisconsin and like many bands from that fine part of the state play a style that combines old HC influences with crust and even grind, but these guys have a little bit more of an old school punk sound to them.

I also got *DIRGE* zine #3, which is $2 ppd US (147 Rugby Rd, Brooklyn, NY 11226). This is the second issue I have seen of Eugene's zine and it is very well done. Most remarkable about *DIRGE* is the amazing number of original live pictures that are in it and actually look great even though this is a photocopied zine! This issue has info on the old Polish band SIEKIERA and an interview with BOMBANFALL(!). Excellent collage art and some reviews too. Cool!

There is a new re-release of a few DISRUPT tracks on a self-titled 12" that compiles tracks from the recording session of the WARCOLLAPSE 7" split and SAUNA split LP—back in '93 I guess. Great songs and outstanding recording quality, which DISRUPT sometimes had and sometimes didn't. It's on 180 gram vinyl and is a gatefold, so a real royal treatment for this release! It is slightly weird that it's a 45 rpm 12," and only uses maybe half the vinyl on each side. Couldn't some other tracks have been added? But, that's nit picking I suppose. Incredible.

Other very worthy reissues are the GAS *1982-1986 Gas* LP discography on Partners In Crime Records. If only all the old Japanese punk bands could get the PIC treatment, it'd be quite nice!

HOHNIE Records has done it yet again by reissuing all the KANSAN UUTISET material on a LP! 29 tracks of one of the more underappreciated Finnish thrashcore bands.

REALITY CRISIS – *Discharge Your Frustration* LP is out now as a co-release by H:G Fact and Whisper In Darkness. One of the better dark crust punk bands going on in the Japanese scene. I was eagerly anticipating this and it is incredible!!

POPULATION REDUCTION – *Each Birth a New Disaster* LP on Tank Crimes (www.tankcrimes.com) is a fine example of some blistering grind inspired by beer, weed, humor, and well, what else do you need really? These guys are a duo, meaning no vocals, but they pull it off fairly well. Lyrics are humorous and border on ANAL CUNT-ish. "Cock Rock Barbecue," "Sausage Factory Showdown," Black metal Beach Party," etc.

Lately, I have also been working on a few records I am releasing, which I am constantly trying to get my shit together to make happen, and besides that I have been busy. I will likely be trying to cover more music in the future as my energy to be creative enough to think of something quasi-original to say is sort of at a low ebb right now. If you want to provoke me into writing something, message me, or send me something dammit!

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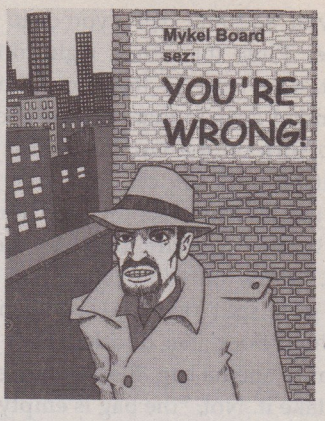


"No solutions are proposed. On the other hand, would it be reasonable to berate someone who tells you there's a fire in the building because they don't lead you to the exits?"—Howard Andrew

"I see your point. But I still think you're full of shit."—The Improper Newspaper

"Stop! Stop! It's killing me! It hurts."

"You can take a little more. Just a little," I say.

"No! You're killing me! I'm going to explode!"

"Just a bit... damn. The bag is empty! Fuck."

I remove the tube from her tight brown hole.

"Hold it!" I say.

But holding is not to be done. An explosion. Brown and thick as Guinness. A massive squirt. Chunky. Filled with turds the size of golf balls. Of peas. Of baseballs. Brown snakes. Garter snakes. Pythons. Little brown worms with touches of gray fluff on the sides, wiggling in the soup, like something alive. Soft and mushy, over everything. Covering the back of her legs. A smell. Her smell. The fecal fragrance only hinted in a fart. Expressed full volume in this offal avalanche.

The brownness drips over my naked body. Paints my thighs. Out it pours. Splashing on my belly, my chest, into my mouth, up my nose. Furiously, I pump myself.

"Spray!" I gasp. "Spray some more."

"I can't," she says. "It's all gone. I'm empty. That's all there is."

Damn! I knew it. Enema bags are for wimps. Wussies who say, "Of course I could have taken more. It's just the bag was empty. The water ran out."

Yeah right.

If you had any balls, you'd go to the source. Plug that hose right into the faucet. One end in the pipe. One end embedded deep in that crinkled chocolate crater. Turn on the tap. Let 'er rip. Don't turn it off until *you* can't take any more. Until *you* give up. Feel the pain. From the pain to the pleasure back to the pain again. To the bursting point. Just before your guts split open to spew onto the bathroom floor. *You* decide. Don't blame an empty enema bag. Blame yourself. *You* can't take it. Not, "the bag is empty."

My attitude toward enemas is American. In America, I am in control...or should be. I make your own decisions, or should make them. I am captain of my own shit. Sink or swim in it. I'm an individual...the basis of power. More important than the group. *They* do not control me. *I* control me.

My attitude toward the rest of life is *not* American. In fact, it's that very illusion of *each of us as individuals, controlling our own destiny* that I want to rail against in this column.

It's 10:30 a.m. My first class is finished. I have 15 minutes to take a piss and get ready for the next class. In the bathroom, a new sign decorates the wall. A picture of a faucet. A single drip hangs off the end. Like that last drop that hangs off another end and goes down your pants after you zip up.

The sign says, TURN OFF THE FAUCET. SAVE WATER. A DRIPPING FAUCET CAN COST OVER A HUNDRED GALLONS A DAY.

Gee, a hundred gallons.

A single cornfield uses 40 MILLION gallons a year to produce its crop. That's more than 200,000 gallons a day during the six months from planting to harvest. Oh, but your hundred gallons a day. That'll do a lot!

200,000 gallons a day to turn food into fuel so obese Midwesterners can drive to the mall. 200,000 gallons a day, so electric-powered machines can change genetically engineered corn to gas delivered by oil burning diesel trucks. 200,000 gallons a day to grow crops never eaten by hungry people, but stuffed into the hungry cars of the rich.

What can you do?

Buy Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream. Don't eat meat. Bike instead of using a car. Recycle your newspapers. Wash out that condom and use it again. Every little bit helps.

NO IT DOESN'T!

The world isn't going to change if you shut off the faucet, recycle your Sunday *New York Times*, bike to work, or stand on the street corner holding an anti-war sign printed by union labor on recycled paper. Your effort is like a grape-sized turd in an avalanche of enema-induced crap. It don't mean shit.

New York's billionaire mayor, Mike Bloomberg, tells us he unplugs his Blackberry charger every morning. It uses electricity even when it's plugged in, he says. Save a kilowatt here...a kilowatt there. It adds up.

NO IT DOESN'T!

Bloomberg Radio, broadcasting across America uses more electricity in 30 seconds than a plugged-in Blackberry charger uses in 30 years. Your Blackberry charger doesn't mean shit.

Can one person make a difference? Sure. Ask Lee Harvey Oswald, Mark David Chapman, John Hinckley, or John Wilkes Booth.

I'm not advocating such action. See Mr. CIA-Man, FBI man? Homeland Security? I'm *not* advocating. I'm just pointing out. OK? I'd never advocate such actions. Oh no, not me. It's illegal to do that. Terrorism. I don't do illegal or terrorist. I'm just a nice guy who enjoys a brown shower every once in a while. OK?

Who knows? Maybe brown showers are illegal. The governor of New York quit because of simple sex. Not even a brown shower. He just paid a shitload of cash to a pretty girl. If it were free...no problem. But to pay for it. Well, you gotta quit for that.

Of course, I enjoyed seeing him squirm. This was the same guy who fought for anti-John legislation. For tougher penalties for people who pay for prostitutes. Serves him right. But, morally, it's wrong. He got screwed for screwing. A victimless crime...except that the law makes victims.

OK, back to the topic. One person making a difference:

It's the *if everybody* thinking that gets to me. *If everybody turned off their faucet. If everybody stopped eating meat. If everybody was nice to colored people.* Jeezus fuckin' Christ.

Everybody is not a nice person. *Everybody* does not read this column. This zine. This blog. *Everybody* does not subscribe to *The Nation* or *MRR*. *Everybody* does not exist. People are individuals. They have no power.

Governments and corporations are *not* individuals. *They* do *not* act independently. *They* act for their own benefit. *They* have the power.

You are not responsible for the state of the world, the country, the environment. *They* are. You have no say in the matter. You have no power. Or rather, you do have power, but to use it is illegal and will have huge consequences. It'd probably cost you your life. At least, it'd cost you your freedom.

So don't try to assuage your conscience by donating that coat to Warm The Homeless Inc. Don't think your vote or your knocking on doors or your standing on the street with a clipboard will do anything more than annoy people. Your not flushing after every piss will do nothing more than stink up your bathroom.

So Mykel, what do we do? It is *we* who are reading your column. It's not corporations that hang on every pubic hair caught in the effluvia of Mykel Board. It is individuals. World governments do not subscribe to *MRR*. It's people. We're the ones who have to act. We are all we have.

Answer: The first step in Individuals Anonymous is to admit that you're helpless. You can't do a thing. You have no power. If you had it, you'd switch sides. After that, I don't know.

The rain of shit that pours from the anus of the corporatocracy is browner, with greater chunks than anything you can clean up. And they don't stop when the bag runs dry.

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to email comment on the column]

—> *Hubba hubba dept:* You know how sometimes you see a girl who's so overwhelmingly captivating that you feel like running out and buying a dildo so she can fuck you on the spot?

Kissy Kamekaze is a band of such girls. They are so sexy. And so powerfully punk rock that you can't help but want 'em up

your ass. Go see 'em next time they're in town. Take one up the tube for me.

—> *Bully for you dept:* Kyle N sent me a scary article from *USA Today*. It reports that schools are pushing for internet Bully laws. That is, law punishing people who "harass" others over the internet. Right now, those laws are aimed at kids...but they involve the cops. Who knows where it could lead?

Seems inevitable, though. I mean, China has all those censorship laws. Yahoo! and Google help them by sending copies of citizen search records. Watch what you put in that search window...it may come back to haunt you!

—> *Toying with reality dept:* Also from Kyle is a report of a new Japanese toy: Gloomy Bear. (tinyurl.com/y3wo8c for details.) The cute little bear has massive claws. In its cartoon ads, you can see it attack and bloody little kids. Claw them to pieces. A dose of reality for the tots who think life is gonna be a bowl of Tickle Me Elmos.

—> *The real power of gas (companies) dept:* You might know the Prius car. It's a "hybrid" that runs on electricity and gas. You can push a button and switch it to "electric only"...if you live in Japan or Europe. That button is not included on models made for the North American market. I wonder why. Yeah right I do.

—> *What's this thing about feet? dept:* The February 2008 issue of *Church and State* magazine (www.au.org) talks about two incidents that go weirdly together.

The first is in South Carolina. There, the First Baptist Church of North Augusta provides shoes for the local children. Not so bad, right? Well, before giving the children shoes (on public school property), church members "wash the children's feet like Jesus did his disciples."

Says the Rev. Mark Owens, "We just feel like God's called us to reach as many children as we can with the Gospel of Christ and a pair of shoes."

I bet there's a line of priests from here to next week volunteering for that job.

But wait! There's more.

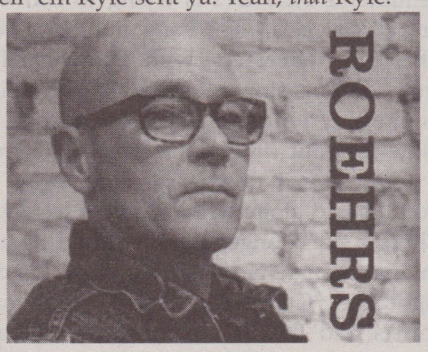
Officials at the University of Michigan at Dearborn plan to install special foot-washing stations for Muslim students. University officials said they started the program because some Muslim students say their religious beliefs "require them to wash their feet numerous times during the day." The university says it was moved to create the stations because of student injuries when trying to wash their feet in normal restroom sinks.

—> *What color is green? dept:* In their rush to green up their living rooms, Americans are running out and buying expensive curlicue fluorescent light bulbs. These wonderful inventions give half the light for ten times the money of a normal light bulb. Yeah! And now, the greater catch.

Those florescent bulbs have mercury in them! Yep, like nuclear energy, they're real ecological...until they're used up. Then the mercury goes into a landfill where it leaches into the soil and enters your food—or maybe the corn in your engine.

—> *Another kind of prisoner dept:* This girl's fiancé is in the clink. Someone with a psychiatrist license forced her into a "rehab" center. He didn't like her social behavior. They can do that, you know? *They* have power.

Anyway she's lonely and mixed up and needs help. So if you can write to her, it would be much appreciated: Angela Myers, PO Box 1358, Spokane, WA 99210. Tell 'em Kyle sent ya. Yeah, *that* Kyle.



ON GOES THE FIGHT

Fuck! Grave Mistake Records from Richmond, Virginia has dropped three motherfucking bombs on you punks! The San Francisco Bay Area is well represented by those young cretins NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE and their new "Claustrophobic" EP. These five scorching thrash numbers were recorded in East Palo Alto, California in October 2007. Right off the bolt NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE clobbers you with "Control"! Fuck yes! These young men from Halfmoon Bay, California immediately drop the hammer on you! "Control" smashed right into "Sick And Tired" and "Last Straw". Yes! Side B continues the aural assault with "Under Pressure". Excellent! NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE delivers the death knell with "Hypocrite". Brutal! First quality hardcore spoken here! Contact: puke650@gmail.com or www.myspace.com/nightstickjusticeba. The second offering this month from Grave Mistake is this esteemed punk band DEEP SLEEP. The 45 has an A-side that will gnaw on your gonads with "I'm On Top"!! Yes! 52 seconds of punk rock perfection! Next is "Curbside Breakdown". Yes sir! After 50 seconds of madness you encounter "Textbook Timebomb". Excellent! Side B yields "Nothing Left", "Not Coming Back" and "Manic Euphoria". This is an enjoyable, polished punk-rock EP. The third offering from Grave Mistake is the CLOAK AND DAGGER "Kamikazes" EP. The title song "Kamikazes" is a sophisticated jangly, slice of pure punk. Very good! Side two is a Jonathan Richman cover of the 1976 song "She Cracked". This cover is interesting but does not hold up to the CLOAK AND DAGGER original material. For these new releases contact Grave Mistake Records at: PO Box 12482, Richmond, VA 23341, www.gravemistakerecords.com

CRIMINAL DAMAGE from Portland, Oregon came to the San Francisco Bay Area for two excellent shows. The first CRIMINAL DAMAGE show at Slim's featured Robert and Devon of WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? with their new band CONQUEST FOR DEATH. The fuckers kicked a lot of punk-rock ass! Check this set list: "Yellow Tape," "Repeat," "Beyond," "Wake Up," Unbridled," "Positive," "Front Row," "Level Head," "Total Terrorism," "Night Crew," "Sunny Day," "War On Children," "Surrounded," "Butcher Baby" (PLASMATICS), "Still Angry," "Condition Critical," "This Is Our Time," "Rock'n'Roll," "Shadows" and "No Safe Words." Fucking great! Devon performed his usual athletic leaps and bounds. Robert played like a man possessed with guitar and hair going to unanticipated extremes! This set the stage for CRIMINAL DAMAGE. These men and woman have distilled the rare mixture of punk and Oi! to a hybrid of frightening power! The show was inspirational! The SUBHUMANS (UK) were hard-pressed to top that display!

The real fucking barn-burner show

came a week later when CRIMINAL DAMAGE returned to play the Knockout on Mission Street. This CRIMINAL DAMAGE show exploded from the first note! The packed crowd went absolutely berserk! The band fed off of the manic outpouring of testosterone! Guitars were slung back and forth—the singer went off! It's always rewarding when the crowd brings out the wild side of a band! Fucking brilliant! Read this set list: "Power Of Fools," "No Turning Back," "Last Chance," "The Choice," "Empty Eyes," "Media Casualties," "WWIII," "On Goes The Fight," "Tomorrow," "Anesthesia," and "No Solution." Yes! This show was one that the punks and skins will remember for the whole fucking year!

Fuck yes! The Balazo Club on Mission Street in San Francisco put on a hell of a skinhead/hardcore show recently! The show featured some younger bands such as MAIN STREET MILITIA from Sonora, California and some local stalwarts such as TROUBLEMAKERS and HARRINGTON SAINTS from Oakland and hardcore champions TRIED AND TRUE from San Jose. HARRINGTON SAINTS have honed their sound down to an efficient street machine sound. The HARRINGTON SAINTS rolled through "Working Class Friday Night," "Dead Broke USA," "Guilty," "Sounds Of The Street," "Riot City," and more including a great cover of "Razors In The Night" (BLITZ) all first rate! Next up were the TROUBLEMAKERS from Oakland, California! These fuckers kicked a lot of skinhead butt! Some of the standout songs were "Rough House," "Your Scene," "Alcoholic," "Bad Attitude," "I Don't Care," "Dirty Cop" and the great sing-along "Liquor Store." Excellent! TRIED AND TRUE from San Jose took the stage as the evening continued to gain momentum. This skinhead/hardcore outfit keeps getting stronger every show! TRIED AND TRUE has been together for eight years with the current line-up together for three years. TRIED AND TRUE play some of the most uncompromising hardcore you will hear anywhere in the United States of America! Dan and the men of TRIED AND TRUE stormed through: "Do It Today," "That's Life," "At Arms Length," "Democratic," "I'm True," "You're Through," "Lottery," "My Scene," "Fight Song," "Put In The Boot," "Here To Stay/Don't Tread On Me," "Grow A Spine," "Carpe Diem," "March Of The SOD," and "Sargent D." These fucks will devastate you delicate punk rockers! This rough and ready hardcore is fuelled by testosterone and hate! At the Balazo show the San Gabriel Valley Unity Skinheads were in attendance. This added to the good flavor of the evening! Good company with good music with a minimum of ultra-violence. A great time was had by all! Check out TRIED AND TRUE at: www.myspace.com/triedandtrue

Fuck yes! You skins and punks are in luck! Dennis F.U. and his veteran NYC hardcore crew present the brand new FED UP! CD entitled *Fuck Your Life*! Yes sire! This United Riot Records release will singe the short hairs on your goddamn head! This CD comes right at you with the opening salvo "Sick Fucks." Some of you may have found yourselves in a strip club or a peep show over the years. Song two is "Old School Pride (O.S.P.)" wherein FED UP! pays respect to the men that created NY Hardcore: AGNOSTIC FRONT, CRO-MAGS, WARZONE and others. Song three is an anthem for the cheapest high in the bodega: "Steel Reserve" (malt liquor). "Hostile Attitude" has a truckload of venom for an individual trying to control another man. Read this: "You always tell me what to do / How to live my life and crew / Fuck it... Fuck you! / You always tell me what to say / Why don't you tell me something new / I'm getting sick and tired of you! / Fuck it. Fuck you!" The sentiments FED UP! is trying to convey are crystal clear! For song number five, FED UP! clobber you with "Nowhere To Run." Dennis sings: "I sense the hatred in your eyes / I'm the one that you despise / Now it's your time—your time has come / Can't live it down—can't go away / You'll stand alone when it's time to pay." There's a lot of anger and rage building up in that song! "Nowhere To Run" leads right into "Gonna Get Yours" about terrorists and the beliefs that they use as excuses to kill innocent people. "Butt Man" sings the praises of a woman's ass. This is a sentiment shared by most punks if you can get them to admit to it! "Last Straw" is filled with venom: "This is the last straw / Don't let them get to you / Gotta make them pay their dues / Got to strive for a better way / We'll make them all fucking pay!" Yes! We storm through "Return" and "Aimless Youth" and then we get to "Back The Fuck Up." Read this shit: "Back the fuck up / Ain't gonna fuck with me / Back the fuck up / Your life don't mean shit to me..." Is that clear to you fucks? You finish off this strong *Fuck Your Life* CD by FED UP! with "Chupa Chocha," "Elimination," "Tattoos" and the self-titled anthem for Dennis and the bad men, "Fed Up!." This is strong as fuck NY Hardcore that cuts across skinhead and HC lines to bring the citizens together! Get this CD right now (LP coming soon!) from United Riot Records: www.unitedriotrecords.com

Fucking A! Mike Jo from Longshot Music with support from Eric and Pirates Press have unleashed a brilliant street-rock 10" EP for you skins and punks! The new 10" features MARCHING ORDERS from Australia. This rollicking 10" will be out next month and the title will be "Last Train Home" with songs as follows: "Had Enough", the title track "Last Train Home", "Jordy Boy", "Voice Of Ignorance" and "Won't Take Away". This is solid rock'n'roll with an infectious bite! The top-notch singing reminds one of Charlie Harper and the UK SUBS – That is high praise indeed! This band has tight harmonies, droning guitar rhythms and hooks galore!! Some of the sing-along bits combined with tasteful guitar fills will bring to mind THE BUSINESS from the "Suburban Rebels" album. MARCHING ORDERS will be coming all the way from Australia to play the East Coast Oi! Fest on May 24th/25th in Allentown, Pennsylvania and this ten-inch will be available at that time. Contact Longshot Music c/o Pirates Press: 980 Harrison Street, San Francisco, CA 94107, www.myspace.com/longshotmusic
See you fucks at the bar!!!

"Why is this recession different from almost all other recessions?" asked Herbert Barchoff. The economist, a former president of the Council of Economic Advisers, answered his own question: "This is not only the usual cyclical recession, but also a structural recession."

Barchoff's dark assessment appeared in a letter to the editor of *The New York Times*—in June 1992. Then, like now,

Americans were suffering through a long, grinding recession following a boom (under Reagan) that had primarily benefited the wealthy. There were mass layoffs. The real estate market had collapsed. Foreclosures were rampant.

George H.W. Bush, who had expected to coast to reelection on the strength of his near 90 percent post-Gulf War approval ratings, projected a Herbert Hoover-like resolve to not lift a finger to alleviate the misery. The Federal Reserve cut interest rates, but it didn't help. Six months later, angry voters fired an out-of-touch president who seemed unwilling to fix an economy he didn't think was broken in favor of a guy who claimed to feel our pain.

Barchoff, it would turn out, was too pessimistic. "To reverse the excesses of the 1980s," he wrote, "restructuring has been going on in massive proportions at every level. It is a rare day that newspapers do not report layoffs, often in the thousands in the industrial sector." What Barchoff didn't know—few people did—was that the US was about to begin the longest, broadest, and biggest period of economic expansion experienced by any civilization in human history.

Downsizing continued in traditional sectors like manufacturing and newspapers. Even during the Clinton boom, millions of people were ruined, forced to declare bankruptcy. Midwestern cities were reduced to rusted-out shells. But none of that mattered to Wall Street. The Internet revolution prompted so much capital investment, and generated so many new jobs—freshly minted college grads thought it perfectly normal to earn $85,000 moving around lines of HTML—that otherwise sane people began talking about a "new paradigm" in which "the old rules no longer apply."

In other respects, however, Barchoff was prescient. "[The then-new European Community] will substantially hurt our ability to be competitive," he correctly predicted. "The drop in interest rates is no solution. During the Great Depression the prime rate went to one percent, with no cure. When you are out of work or afraid of losing your job, you do not take on debt. Nor will entrepreneurs borrow even very cheap money unless there is a market."

The Bush Sr. recession was a grim affair. When I graduated from Columbia in 1991, the university canceled its annual jobs fair due to employers' lack of interest. But it was a picnic compared to what we're facing now. Bush Jr. could finally realize Barchoff's nightmare of a structural recession—the kind of no-way-out shock experienced by Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

"Normal" cyclical recessions feature increased unemployment, which puts downward pressure on prices. You rarely see high unemployment and high inflation at the same time. Conservative economists point to rising inflation during the late 1970s as an exception, but that wasn't even a downturn, much less a recession. Inflation was high but unemployment was low. Anyway, the inflation didn't hurt workers; during the Carter years mean wages rose faster than inflation. The opposite is true now. Real income is falling.

The economy has bled 3.1 million jobs since George W. Bush assumed the presidency in 2001, the worst record since the Depression. The official unemployment rate, constantly re-jiggered to make the economy appear more robust, has risen to 5.1 percent. The long-term unemployment rate, which includes people who have had such bad luck looking for work that they've given up entirely, has doubled, to over 13 percent.

Meanwhile, inflation is approaching seven percent. Again, that's the official inflation rate. Your mileage as an average American—who spends a third of your pay on housing and more and more on gas—will vary. But let's not dwell on the irony of $4-a-gallon gas resulting from a war fought to steal oil.

But wait. There's even more bad news.

Two-thirds of economic activity is generated by consumer spending. Most people are broke. So much for that two-thirds. "In 2000," reports David Leonhardt in *The Times*, "at the end of the last economic expansion, the median family made about $61,000, according to the Census Bureau's inflation-adjusted numbers. In 2007, in what looks to have been the final year of the most recent expansion, the median family, amazingly, seems to have made less—about $60,500."

This, says, Leonhardt, is a big deal. "This has never happened before, at least not for as long as the government has been keeping records." RBC Capital Markets reports that consumer confidence has fallen below 30 percent, an all-time record low. T.J. Marta, a fixed-income strategist at RBC, said: "What confidence? There is no confidence. It's like 1929."

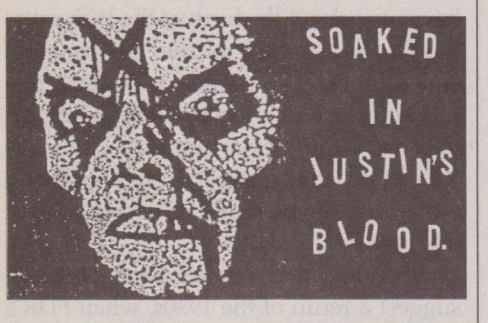
If Barchoff had picked up a copy of the *San Jose Mercury-News* in 1992, he would have read about the birth of the Web revolution, then touted as the "information superhighway." But there's nothing like that coming down the pike today. To paraphrase the ever-quotable Donald Rumsfeld, we're going to have to make do with the economy we have, not the one we wish we had.

Liberal economists like Paul Krugman suggest a rerun of the 1930s, when FDR's New Deal employed millions to build new infrastructure like dams and bridges. But none of the three remaining presidential contenders is likely to undertake such a thing. "The worst-case scenario" about the 1991 war against Iraq, Barchoff said in 1992, would have been if it had lasted two years and cost an extra $200 billion. Iraq War II, now in its sixth year, is currently pegged at an estimated $3 trillion. Republican John McCain is committed to pouring more trillions into Iraq War II until victory is achieved, i.e., forever. As Democrats wary of being tarnished with the label of "big spender," both Obama and Clinton will likely place fiscal discipline ahead of expansive new government programs.

There is no short-term fix. In the long term, we must put more money into more people's pockets. That means higher wages and lower taxes for the poor and middle class. Some of what is needed is easy to see: a more progressive tax code, repealing laws that allow employers to harass and fire those who try to organize unions, nationalizing industries run by vampire capitalists—health insurers, private hospitals, colleges and universities. Banks encourage predatory lending while stifling saving. They ought to be re-regulated. What madness permits them to charge 30 percent on credit cards while paying one percent on passbook savings accounts?

More—much more—is necessary to prevent the wholesale collapse of the US economic system. A maximum wage

should be imposed—the highest paid American should earn no more than ten times the lowest paid. I know, I know—none of this will happen. There will be nothing but Band-Aids and lazy rhetoric as we plummet into the abyss. It cannot be otherwise, for our politics are ossified, the media is corporatized, and we the people are dull and apathetic.



RIGHTEOUS IN DESTRUCTION

...are the opening lyrics to the Walls LP that I had the distinct pleasure of reviewing a few months back, and truer words are rarely spoken. This Seattle/Portland force made the trek to San Francisco this month to play a killer show on a rare blisteringly cold SF night at Balazo Gallery on Mission Street with Acephalix, Warkrime, and Sacred Shock. All the bands truly raged hard, but fuck!... I had high expectations for their live set from all the things I had heard and how much I already loved their record. Well, let me just say those expectations were met and surpassed. I can only liken the sound and atmosphere of the Walls live experience to a doom-obsessed (not the band) woolly mammoth playing later Black Flag tunes while repeatedly kicking you in the face. It was that good. There's something in their playing style that does such a killer job at creating tension and stress to the point where it was as if Armageddon was going to birth from August's mouth mid-song and the world was gonna implode.

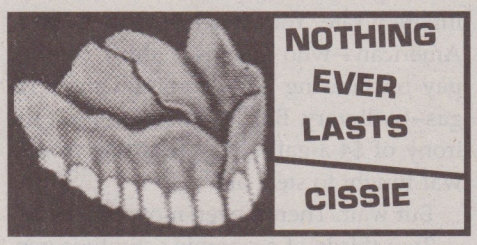
* * *

MRR has a policy where a record can't be reviewed more than once in a year regardless of format (CD/LP) or label, so, occasionally worthy vinyl issues of previous CD-only releases are forced to be left out. The latest release to fall prey to said policy is Reality Crisis' *Discharge Your Frustration*. This album was released half-dozen or so months back as a CD on H:G Fact, and has now been given the vinyl treatment by Portland's Whispers in Darkness label. I'd just like to reiterate what I said in the Year End Top-Ten and in my review of the CD by stating that this record is one of the most storming and energetic hardcore records that I've heard in eons—especially for a new one. Blasting Japanese hardcore of the finest vintage. I highly urge you to seek this out and you can get a copy from: Whispers In Darkness / PO Box 40113 / Portland, OR 97240-0113, or check your favorite distro.

Since we're on the subject of Japanese hardcore, I'd like to state that I'm looking for a penpal in the land of the rising sun with whom to trade new releases. It's getting harder and harder over here to get my grubby mitts on the newer stuff coming out of the country as they seem to sell out in seconds flat (i.e. Kaibushitsu EP, Order *Donki*, and *Toyota* singles). If you're interested, drop me a line at justin@maximumrocknroll.com or write me at the *MRR* PO Box.

This month was made possible by the following: No Peace? EP, No Comment, Hatred Surge, Hubbs' obsession with *My Brain Hurts*, obvs Walls and Reality Crisis, Stickmen With Rayguns/Bobby Soxx/Teenage Queers, Francis Harold and the Holograms, Cult Ritual 7", Infest *No Man's Slave*, Deathreat, Bloodbath demos, Sick Of It All, and Outburst 7".

Anyone got a spare Bobby Soxx *Hate in the '80s*?



I thought my social life was over when I finally gotta 'nother job, but April was non-stop fun. Early in the month, almighty *MRR* faves Criminal Damage played at the Knockout. This show was ridiculously packed and hot, and *everyone* was dancing. Bruce and Dougie were running around arm in arm with beers in air. Hubbs was spotted crowd surfing with his glasses and jacket still on. Layla and Vinnie fucked up the pit! Most fun set of the year, for sure. Before Crim Dam played, I had my first exposure to Yellow Eyes. This was only their second gig and they played an impressive set of loud, abrasive hardcore punk. Not for the meek or weak! Needles continued to impress too. Is the breakdown in "Wish List" for real??? Every time I hear it, I feel like the world is joyously exploding—and I wish it would. Somewhere in the mix, Stiff Jeans played a set of fun, party-style punk rock complete with a Sado-Nation cover.

A few weeks later I rushed to Balazo from work via cab (jet-set) to check out what Walls and Sacred Shock had to offer. Sadly I missed Acephalix, but I advise *MRR*'s readers to seek out their new demo tape. Walls' recorded output had not prepared me for their live show whatsoever. They are the only band that I have seen to make me feel like I was on drugs, and I don't do drugs. Seriously, mind-fuckingly intense. Nick is one of the most creative and talented guitarists in recent memory. Sacred Shock followed with a great set of solid hardcore—neat riffs galore and impressive musicianship. Their songwriting is constantly improving, and they played a couple of first-rate new tunes at this show. The members of Sacred Shock are my favorite people to eat tacos and drink iced coffee with, so I was stoked to have them as houseguests for a few days—even though we didn't get to eat tacos because SF tacos *suck*. Warkrime ended the show and was the only band to get the kids moving. However, the highlight of their set was the sound guy forgetting to turn off the battery-drained Sham 69 tape that was playing over the PA in between bands.

In addition to all that, I turned 31 this month. Fuck you, I'm old! My buddy Josh came down from Portland with his friend Kate (who now also qualifies as my friend). We bowled, ate Cancun burritos and El Salvadoran food, drank coffee, acted fools on the radio show, walked around with Kate's jam box, etc. It was fun! So far, it's OK to be 31. I gotta bunch of cool gifts including the Pierced Arrows LP, Cat Conte's toffee cookies, an It's It ice cream bar, Ritter Sport chocolate, and a magic tree. If anybody wants to kick down the Klaxon 7", Tozibabe 7" or first Rats LP in honor of my 31 years on this planet, I won't complain.

Feel free to write me for whatever reason: cissie@maximumrocknroll.com

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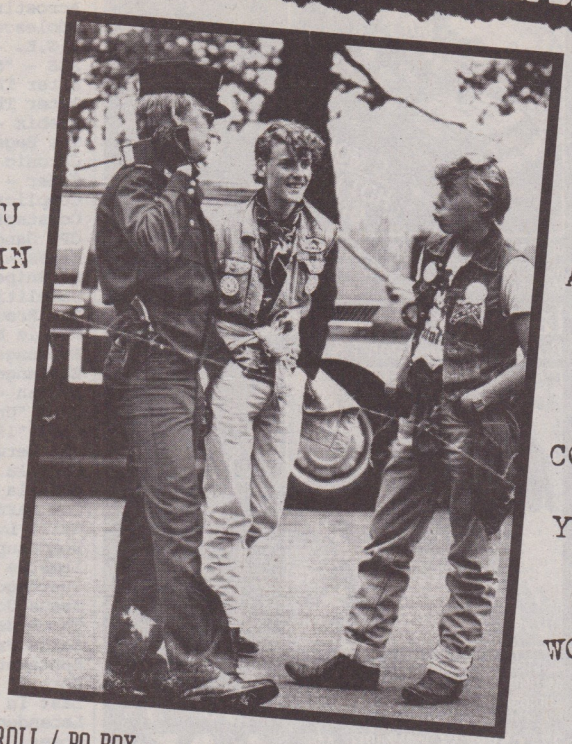

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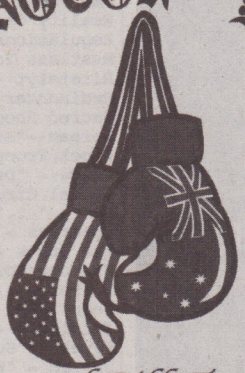

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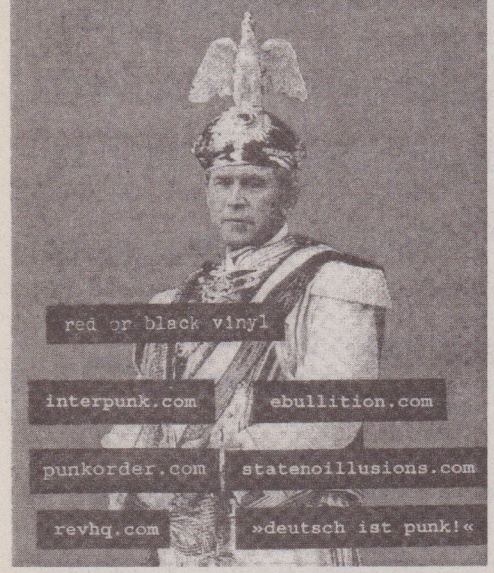

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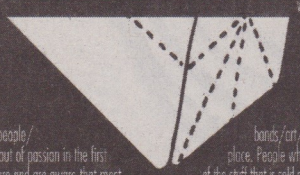

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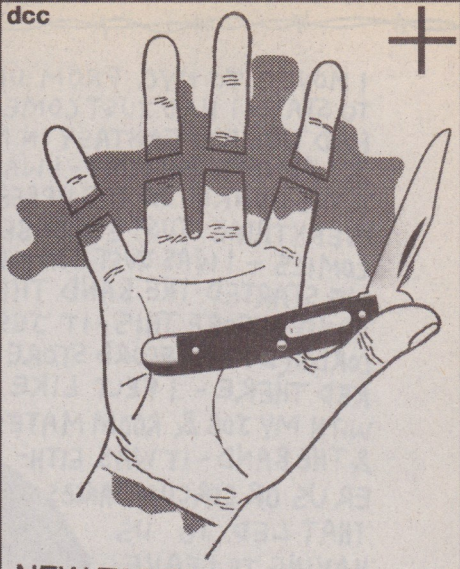

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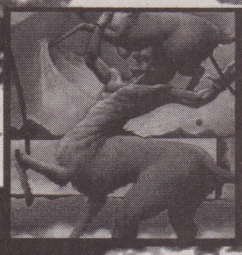

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MRR NEWS

MRR NEWS FOR ISSUE #301 COMPILED BY ARIEL CELESTE AND JUSTIN BRIGGS

CLASHES IN SADR CITY HIT IRAQI CIVILIANS

From an article by Sam Dagher

US and Iraqi forces have been battling Moqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army there since March 25. A mini Koran and a toy cell-phone was lying next to a bandaged Batoul Ahmed, barely 2 years old, as her mother wept by the bed in a Sadr City hospital Thursday, where many of the injured children have been taken during the recent spike in fighting. In this densely populated Shiite district that has become the latest front in the US and Iraqi campaign against Moqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army militia, the youngest residents are among those suffering most. On a visit Thursday to the Imam Ali Hospital in the heart of Sadr City, almost a dozen children sought treatment as their parents and family members waited anxiously nearby. Some of the young patients had been hit by shrapnel, others by stray bullets as they played inside their homes or went outside during a lull in the battles. Since March 25, when clashes with the Mahdi Army started in Basra, Baghdad, and other parts of southern Iraq, at least 142 people have been killed and 800 wounded in Sadr City alone, according to Qassim al-Suwaidi, the hospital's director. Nearly one-third of the victims have been women and children, he says. US air strikes continued to hit buildings in Sadr City and at least 15 people were killed in the district, the Mahdi Army's main Baghdad stronghold. The US military says it is targeting "criminals."

Dr. Suwaidi says his biggest challenge is evacuating the casualties fast enough so they can quickly receive proper care – his hospital isn't able to perform complicated procedures on the more critically wounded victims. Because of the cordon imposed by US and Iraqi forces on Sadr City and the ban on all vehicles from leaving the area, he says his ambulances are usually met by other ambulances outside the district's checkpoints. Although fighting was tense at times, moments of calm descended on Sadr City Thursday. People walked to work or shopped in the few open markets. US forces remained entrenched—in tanks and armored vehicles—all around the enclave.

More American forces were seen streaming in Thursday. Inside Sadr City, it's exclusively the domain of Mr. Sadr's militia. Not a single Iraqi policeman or soldier was in sight Thursday. Fresh graffiti disparaging the government and the militia's main rival, the Badr organization that is allied to Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, is everywhere. While Mr. Maliki has demanded that the Mahdi Army disarm, Sadr has threatened an escalation. But as previous standoffs in Sadr City have shown in the past four years, military action here that has killed countless civilians seems only to strengthen support for the Mahdi Army. "Our politicians promised us paradise, but look what they are still doing to us five years later," says Mahdi Muhammad, who stood next to his son, Sajjad, stretched out on a hospital bed. The boy was wounded when a projectile exploded next to the spot where he was playing soccer outside his house. Mr. Mahdi, out of work since the fighting started, may have to sell his family's possessions to pay his hospital bill. Nearby was Tajia Kharbeet, who lost her husband and one daughter in an explosion during the fighting Wednesday. She sat between two beds occupied by her young daughters, Zahraa and Fatima, who survived.

ANARCHISTS ORGANIZING TO HALT SECURITY FAIR

From an article on anarchistnews.org

An anarchist group is threatening to shut down a massive security and technology fair in Ottawa, but police are keeping a close eye on their plans. The CANSEC event, which is in its 10th year, ais described as a "gathering of war profiteers" by protesters. The Network to Oppose War and Racism and the PGA Bloc Ottawa are teaming up in an attempt to thwart the exhibition, which is being held at the Ottawa Congress Centre on Wednesday and Thursday. An event posting on the PGA Bloc website is calling to "shut down the CANSEC arms fair" and "shut down the war machine." Organizers have posted an animation video on YouTube depicting participants of the exhibition and masked demonstrators creating havoc. PGA Bloc could not be reached for comment last night. While the convention is expected to have its own security, Ottawa police have been doing intelligence work on potential protests. Const. Isabelle Lemieux said it's common for the exhibition, like many major events in Ottawa, to hire extra paid-duty officers. Still, police have been doing their own research into the planned demonstrations. "We'll be there as we are for any demonstration," Lemieux said. Police will try and work with demonstrators to create a "safe area" for peaceful protests, Lemieux said. At the same time, police are also mindful of the demonstrators' call to shut the event down. "We're aware of it and we're preparing for it," Lemieux said. A spokesperson for the event said yesterday organizers had not met with police about security, noting security protocol hasn't changed over the past few years. Demonstrators plan two separate marches on that afternoon, followed by a march to the congress Centre organized by PGA Bloc, the city's most vocal anarchist group.

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COPS AND FORMER SECRET SERVICE AGENTS RAN BLACK OPS ON GREEN GROUPS

From an article in Mother Jones

A private security company organized and managed by former Secret Service officers spied on Greenpeace and other environmental organizations from the late-1990s through at least 2000, pilfering documents from trash bins, attempting to plant undercover operatives within groups, casing offices, collecting phone records of activists, and penetrating confidential meetings. According to company documents provided to Mother Jones by a former investor in the firm, this security outfit collected confidential internal records—donor lists, detailed financial statements, the Social Security numbers of staff members, strategy memos—from these organizations and produced intelligence reports for public relations firms and major corporations involved in environmental controversies.

In addition to focusing on environmentalists, the firm, Beckett Brown International (later called S2i), provided a range of services to a host of clients. According to its billing records, BBI engaged in "intelligence collection" for Allied Waste; it conducted background checks and performed due diligence for the Carlyle Group, the Washington-based investment firm; it provided "protective services" for the National Rifle Association; it handled "crisis management" for the Gallo wine company and for Pirelli; it made sure that the Louis Dreyfus Group, the commodities firm, was not being bugged; it engaged in "information collection" for Wal-Mart; it conducted background checks for Patricia Duff, a Democratic Party fundraiser then involved in a divorce with billionaire Ronald Perelman; and for Mary Kay, BBI mounted "surveillance," and vetted Gayle Gaston, a top executive at the cosmetics company (and mother of actress Robin Wright Penn), retaining an expert to conduct a psychological assessment of her. Also listed as clients in BBI records: Halliburton and Monsanto.

BBI, which was headquartered in Easton, Maryland, on the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay, worked extensively, according to billing records, for public-relations companies, including Ketchum, Nichols-Dezenhall Communications, and Mongoven, Biscoe & Duchin. At the time, these PR outfits were servicing corporate clients fighting environmental organizations opposed to their products or actions. Ketchum, for example, was working for Dow Chemical and Kraft Foods; Nichols-Dezenhall, according to BBI records, was working with Condea Vista, a chemical manufacturing firm that in 1994 leaked up to 47 million pounds of ethylene dichloride, a suspected carcinogen, into the Calcasieu River in Louisiana. Like other firms specializing in snooping, Beckett Brown turned to garbage swiping as a key tactic. BBI officials and contractors routinely conducted what the firm referred to as "D-line" operations, in which its operatives would seek access to the trash of a target, with the hope of finding useful documents. One midnight raid targeted Greenpeace. One BBI document lists the addresses of several other environmental groups as "possible sites" for operations: the National Environmental Trust, the Center for Food Safety, Environmental Media Services, the Environmental Working Group, the U.S. Public Interest Research Group, and the Center for Health, Environment and Justice, an organization run by Lois Gibbs, famous for exposing the toxic dangers of New York's Love Canal. For its rubbish-rifling operations, BBI employed a police officer in the District of Columbia and a former member of the Maryland state police. Beckett Brown's efforts to penetrate environmental groups and other targets came to an end when the business essentially dissolved in 2001 amid infighting between the principals. But the firm's officials went on to work in other security firms that remain active today.

Beckett Brown International began when John C. Dodd III met Richard Beckett at a bar in Easton in 1994. Dodd had recently become a millionaire after his father had sold an Anheuser-Busch beer distributorship on Maryland's eastern shore. Beckett ran a local executive recruiting and consulting business. Soon after they met, according to Dodd, Beckett introduced him to Paul Rakowski, a recently retired Secret Service agent, who had put in two decades protecting presidents and foreign heads of state and had become regional manager of the agency's financial crimes division. Rakowski told Dodd he had an idea for a new security business. Dodd subsequently received a fax of a business plan for the new company. The sender's address at the top of the fax, according to Dodd, read: "11/02/94 USSS Financial Crimes Division/Forgery"—which suggested it had come from a Secret Service office. But Dodd was reluctant to put in the start-up money for the enterprise, because he didn't know who all the partners were. To impress him, Dodd says, Rakowski and his former Secret Service colleagues began taking him and his friends on special tours of the White House. "This wasn't a White House tour conducted by tour guides," he says. "They would take us…to areas that said 'Do not pass this line.'"

At one point, Dodd says, a senior Secret Service agent named Joseph Masonis arranged for him to tour a Secret Service facility. "To encourage me to invest in this company," Dodd notes, "they all said 'why not go up to technical security headquarters [of the Secret Service] and you will get an exclusive tour.'…They showed me everything... They were worried about someone flying way up high in a plane, miles from the White House, jumping out of a plane, skydiving, popping the chute and getting on the White House grounds without anybody knowing it. They were working on the technology to pick that up." Dodd says he was blown away by what he saw. (Masonis says, "I have never taken Mr. Dodd to any facility in D.C.") And at a waterfront party, Dodd says, he was introduced to and deeply impressed by George Ferris, a former naval special operations officer and an expert in demolitions.

Eventually, Dodd says, he agreed to be the sole investor of the new firm, and he put up $170,000, the first of what would be several loans at 15 percent interest. (His investment in the firm, Dodd estimates, would grow to a total of $700,000.) The company was officially launched in August 1995, named after Beckett and Sam Brown, a lawyer who helped get it started. Rakowski, Masonis, and Ferris were officials in the firm. Business was good. In early 1997, Beckett Brown provided security services for Bill Clinton's second inauguration, landing a contract worth nearly $300,000. Early clients also included Phillip Morris, Mary Kay, Browning-Ferris Industries, and Nichols-Dezenhall, a Washington-based firm founded in 1987 by Nick Nichols and Eric Dezenhall that specialized in crisis communications, particularly for corporations involved in biotechnology, product safety, and environmental controversies. BBI provided protection for retired General Norman Schwarzkopf, Dodd says, and there was talk it might also get a job to guard the Rolling Stones.

By 1998, BBI had 22 employees working in five different divisions, along with subcontractors that it hired as operatives. The company also looked abroad for new opportunities and recruited more law enforcement and intelligence veterans. David Bresett, a former chief of the Secret Service's foreign intelligence branch, joined the firm as a vice president. (A company biography noted that Bresett, while detailed to the CIA, had directed the investigation that identified the terrorists who blew up Pan Am Flight 103 in 1988.) The firm retained Vincent Cannistraro, a former chief of the CIA's Counterterrorism Center, and earlier one of the government

officials responsible for overseeing U.S. support of the Nicaraguan contras, as a consultant at $75,000 a year. "I did due diligence on a couple of customers," Cannistraro recalls. On the advice of Cannistraro and Bresett, BBI turned down a $1 million job with the Church of Scientology, according to Dodd. (Bresett did not respond to a message asking for comment.) At one point, an employee named Tim Ward, who had been a sergeant in the Maryland state police, traveled to Saudi Arabia for the company, according to Dodd. Phil Giraldi, a former CIA officer, was also on the payroll. According to Giraldi, there was not a lot of work for him and Cannistraro. "We would go to a company like Enron and see if they had any issues if they were looking to acquire a company," he recalled. "See if the [company to be acquired] is connected to the Russian mob. That's what we were selling. We were not very successful." Giraldi left the firm in 1999. By then, he had become aware of the firm's more unconventional activities: "Scooping garbage, trying to get penetrations of companies and environmental groups. I didn't know a lot of the details." But, he says, he knew BBI was "working on Greenpeace."

Time and again, according to Beckett Brown records, the firm looked to trash for intelligence. These trash runs at one point did raise concern within the company. In 1998, David Queen, a senior vice president, sent Rakowski a memo about "dumpster diving." Queen, a former deputy assistant secretary of the treasury and once a U.S. attorney in Pennsylvania, noted that in certain instances searching trash could raise "some troublesome issues," including possible violation of state trespass laws and "possible violation of trade secrets laws." He concluded, "If BBI expects to use this method of information gathering, it would be prudent to get the opinion of outside counsel which could be relied upon by BBI should there be future litigation directed against BBI." Whether or not BBI sought counsel, the dumpster diving continued. In November 1999, according to company documents, Jay Bly traveled to St. Augustine, Florida, to meet with a private detective. He told the investigator that BBI wanted to obtain garbage from the offices of Whetstone Chocolates, a locally based candy manufacturer. (According to BBI billing records, BBI at the time was working for Nichols-Dezenhall on a "Nestle Project-Florida." At press time, Nestle had not responded to a request for comment.) This private investigator and another local gumshoe then tracked the garbage men who made pick-ups at Whetstone and tried to persuade one of the drivers to turn over the trash from Whetstone. The trash collectors wouldn't cooperate. A month later, another private investigator apparently attempted to grab the garbage himself. He sent Bly a fax reporting, "We made a pickup run on December 23,1999 as requested. We were unable to enter the area where the dumpster is located as there appeared to [be] a company party taking place in the break area located in front of the dumpster. We remained in the area for a short time, however, the party continued and we departed the area." A December 1, 1999, BBI briefing paper on a "Nichols-Dezenhall/St. Augustine Project" reported on activities within Whetstone and said that "BBI now has operative in place."

Eric Dezenhall says that he cannot identify clients or vendors with which his firm worked. But he notes in an email that he never saw the briefing paper referring to a BBI operative and Whetstone and that "we would not have been involved in any infiltration operation." He adds, "Nichols-Dezenhall Communications never authorized, directed, or was informed of unethical or illegal activities by forensic investigators employed on any project we have worked on. With regard to our work on matters in which we were teamed with investigators, we are aware only of information-gathering through public records checks and other legitimate means." Dezenhall says that "any use of an 'operative' to infiltrate a company…would be counter to our business interests and any information gathered in that manner would be unusable in court." (In 2003, Dezenhall bought out Nichols and renamed the company Dezenhall Resources. "Our client base and employees from the 1990s have turned over almost entirely," Dezenhall says. According to a source familiar with the firm's current operations, the company has moved away from handling corporations involved in environmental controversies.) Another target of BBI's trash men was Fenton Communications, the liberal PR firm headed by David Fenton that for years has assisted environmental causes. On December 8, 1999, a BBI operative, according to an internal report, "sat surveillance" at Fenton's Washington home, beginning at 2:50 am. In the report, the operative noted the time of the morning garbage pick-up and that he returned to the office to "sort material" and "analyze." BBI ran background checks on both Fenton and his then-wife. The company's files contained photographs of their house as well as client lists, billing information, and personnel information from Fenton Communications. Between July 1998 and February 2001, Fenton says, his firm experienced several break-ins, during which boxes of files and two laptops were stolen. The culprits were never caught.

Greenpeace was the target of one of BBI's more elaborate—and cinematic—intelligence-gathering efforts, according to company documents and an interview with an eyewitness. Jennifer Trapnell, who was dating Ward in the late 1990s, recalls an evening when she accompanied Ward on a job in Washington D.C. "He said they were trying to get some stuff on Greenpeace," she says. Ward wore black clothes and had told her to dress all in black, too: "It was Mission Impossible-like." In Washington, Ward parked his truck in an alley, she remembers, and told her to stay in the truck and keep a lookout. In the alley, he met a couple of other men, whose faces Trapnell did not see clearly. Ward was talking on a walkie-talkie with others, and they all walked off. About an hour later, the men came back and placed two trash bags in Ward's car. Trapnell says she didn't know what they did with the bags—and Ward never explained. In addition to Ward's work, on several occasions in 2000, Jim Daron, the Washington cop who also worked for BBI, submitted reports to BBI for surveillance of Greenpeace's offices. BBI gathered numerous internal Greenpeace documents, including financial reports. It also obtained the instructions for using the security system at Greenpeace's offices. And the Greenpeace files at BBI included a handwritten document that appears to record attempts to crack the security codes on entry doors with notations such as "codes do not match" and "open."

BBI prepared reports on Greenpeace—based on "confidential sources"—for Ketchum. In at least one case, according to Rick Hind, legislative director for Greenpeace (who reviewed these reports at Mother Jones' request), a BBI report written for Ketchum contained information tightly held within the group about planned upcoming events. And a December 2, 1999 BBI report (which does not mention Ketchum) noted that Greenpeace had chosen Kellogg's, Kraft, and Quaker as "their main targets in the GE campaign," that it was developing a campaign tactic called "Food-Aid Expose" (which would highlight the export of genetically-modified foods to other countries), and that it was helping a Wall Street Journal reporter track food companies involved in the debate over genetically-engineered foods.

Over the years, Greenpeace has repeatedly been the target of public relations firms working for industry, and the group has experienced burglaries and caught would-be spies posing as students seeking employment. But Greenpeace officials say they did not know that their organization was under surveillance during that period of time.

In the late 1990s, Greenpeace was working with environmental groups in the stretch of Louisiana dubbed "Cancer Alley," organizing against various forms of industry pollution. Its work there and that of its Louisiana partners became another target for BBI. In 1998, according to BBI emails, correspondence, and records, BBI retained Mary Lou Sapone, a self-described "research consultant," who recruited a paid operative in Louisiana to infiltrate an environmental group called CLEAN. Sapone had something of a talent for infiltrating activist groups. In the late 1980s, working for a security firm called Perceptions International, which was, in turn, working for the

U.S. Surgical Corporation, she penetrated a Connecticut-based animal-rights group, gathering evidence on an activist who would later serve jail time for planting a pipe bomb near the parking space of the company's CEO. The activist would eventually accused Sapone of coaxing her into the plot.

Sapone's operative in Louisiana relayed to her information on what the local enviros were planning, provided gossip on the internal rivalries, and identified the scientists aiding the groups. She passed the intelligence to BBI. In an August 20, 1998 "client briefing," BBI boasted that "our operative is being nominated to the citizen action panels for local industries" and it asked which local industry Condea Vista, the chemical manufacturing firm, would prefer the operative to focus on. (The previous year, Condea Vista had lost a lawsuit brought by the residents of Lake Charles, Louisiana, against the company for the 1994 ethylene dichloride leak and had been slapped with a $7 million judgment.) Another BBI document noted, "The operative has been trained to be inquiring, but not participatory. Operatives are not allowed to offer suggestions or `help' targets in any way. They are trained to seek documents, ID friends and foe legislators and regulators, follow money trails, ID informants, discover future targets."

BBI produced detailed confidential reports for Ketchum on the environmental activism underway in Louisiana. And BBI records indicate that the firm worked for Nichols-Dezenhall on a "Condea Vista Project." Citing "strict confidentiality agreements," Dezenhall will not say whether his firm worked with Condea Vista (or any other company), but he notes in an email, "It would be extremely damaging and wrong...to interpret or portray the term 'operative,' a generic term often used by investigators and former law enforcement types to mean an individual, as implying someone necessarily engaged in illicit actions such as corporate espionage." (Sapone did not respond to a message requesting comment.)

Penetrating a citizens group was not a new endeavor for BBI. In 1996 and 1997 in northern California, where Browning-Ferris Industries was engaged in a battle over the future of a garbage dump, BBI conducted what its records labeled "covert monitoring" and "intelligence gathering" on the North Valley Coalition, a citizens group opposed to the Browning-Ferris project. In September 1997, BBI received a payment of $198,881.05 from BFI.

BBI fell apart in 2001 amid arguments over the company's finances. "It was not a happy company," says Phil Giraldi, the ex-CIA man who had worked there, adding, "I have worked for a number of security companies. Some are ethical, some are not. Beckett Brown was not especially so." When the company was collapsing, Dodd says, he heard that document shredding was underway in its offices, and one weekend he went to the offices and carted off scores of cartons stuffed with records.

BBI's demise led to a lawsuit. Dodd sued Rakowski, Ward, Bly and two others, claiming they had engaged in fraud. In a pretrial statement, Dodd accused them of having "dipped into the Company's coffers for generous salaries, commissions, bonuses, loans, benefits and unsupported expense reimbursements, all the while presenting false and misleading financial information" to Dodd. In 2005, after a month-long trial in Maryland's Talbot County Circuit Court, Dodd lost. He now was out the $700,000 he had invested in the company. By his own estimate, he had spent over a million dollars in legal fees. And he was mad. He claims that he only learned of the firm's sleazier actions after the company imploded and that his lawyers encouraged him not to raise that issue as part of his lawsuit. But after the trial was done, Dodd began contacting some of BBI's targets and shared its records with them. "I wanted the facts to come out," he says. "I feel terrible that my money was used to screw these people over."

Today, boxes and boxes of BBI records sit in warehouse space Dodd rents. Dodd has not gone through all of the material. (The records include internal and confidential financial reports of a local bank that had been the subject of a takeover.) Much of what BBI did remains a mystery to Dodd. A law firm representing the Mars candy corporation pored over all the records, according to Dodd and his lawyer, apparently in search of evidence that Mars had been the target of corporate espionage. (The files contain records indicating that BBI obtained information on the phone calls made by a PR man working with Mars.) Then Dodd heard nothing further from this law firm. Dodd says he would be delighted to testify before Congress about BBI—but no one has invited him to do so.

As for BBI's principals, they are still operating. Tim Ward now runs a security firm called Chesapeake Strategies, which bills itself as "a multinational security and investigative firm comprised of professionals with extensive security experience." Jay Bly works there. Its website boasts that it maintains affiliated offices in Paris, Beijng, Tokyo, Qatar, and Kuwait and that "many team members continue to hold Secret and Top Secret government security clearances." The firm has been active in protecting research facilities from animal-rights activists. In 2002, it won a contract from the General Services Administration "for recreational, hospitality, law enforcement, facilities, industrial and environmental services and products." It was listed on a 2005 lineup of Defense Department contractors. "I don't have any comment about what I am currently doing or what I plan to do," Ward says.

Joseph Masonis works for the Annapolis Group, a security firm. Its website notes that the company's managing directors "have over forty-five years of combined experience with the United States Secret Service." Paul Rakowski married Amy DiGeso, who was CEO of Mary Kay when BBI worked for the cosmetics firm. (Currently, she is a top executive at Estee Lauder.) Rakowski's current occupation—if he has one—is not publicly known.

Richard Beckett is now CEO of Maryland-based Global Security Services, which, according to its website, offers clients a "suite of business solutions" that includes "intelligence services," "disaster management," "information systems security," and "paramilitary operations." Last year, his firm provided bodyguards to Senator Barack Obama.

GLOBAL WARMING ISN'T JUST A PROBLEM FOR PENGUINS

From an article in San Francisco Chronicle

The worldwide issue of climate change has a local twist: It's altering the Bay Area's long-running debate over how and where to grow. Some officials are suggesting that some bayside areas may need to be abandoned in light of studies that indicate San Francisco Bay could rise several feet by 2100 because of sea-level changes. Conversely, other areas along the bay could be developed so that new projects shield low-lying existing communities. At the same time, the call to reduce carbon emissions—a factor in global warming—is being used to argue for dense new development in the region's urban core, rather than on the outskirts of auto-reliant suburbs.

"Global warming isn't just a problem for penguins in Antarctica and polar bears in Alaska," Will Travis, executive director of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, told a gathering of local government officials this week. "We need to take a hard look at how our region is growing." The BCDC was established in 1965 because of concerns that the bay was shrinking—nibbled away by

developers and municipalities that saw shallow marshes as ideal spots for everything from high-rise buildings to sprawling dumps. Now the situation is the reverse. Maps released by the BCDC last year show that rising sea levels of about 1 meter (3.28 feet) would submerge many of the wetlands that now ring much of the bay. Left unchecked, the water would also cover portions of the Oakland and San Francisco airports and other developed locales. "We need to abandon our notion of restoring the bay to the way it was in the past," said Travis, who has been making similar speeches to local groups in recent months. "We need to put the conditions in place that will let us react to the future the way that we want."

Travis was one of several speakers at "Preparing for Rising Sea Levels in the Bay Area," a daylong conference in Oakland on Wednesday. The forum was a first for the region, and much of it focused on steps that can be taken to lessen the region's current energy use as part of larger efforts to slow or reverse global warming.

But the main emphasis was the overlap between local land-use and global climate conditions. The clash is strongest along the water, where land will recede without aggressive - and expensive - intervention. As far back as 1990, a study by the Pacific Institute said it would cost the Bay Area $940 million to adapt to a 1-meter rise in water levels, with an additional $100 million annually in maintenance. The costs were related to higher seawalls and levees and the rebuilding of roads and rail lines at higher elevations.

Institute President Peter Gleick told officials on Wednesday that the cost estimate is "hugely conservative" today. "The status quo around the margins is going to be unsustainable," said Gleick, whose institute is now updating the study. "We're in trouble long before we get to a meter." Buying out landowners Gleick did not say specifically that it might be cost-efficient to buy out some landowners along the bay. The BCDC's Travis did. "There are places where it might be better to remove developments and restore wetlands. Wetlands are wonderful for flood control," Travis said. "Clearly, we can't allow our cities to go under water ... (but) we shouldn't build levees everywhere." Travis did not give specific examples of where such retreats might be advisable; any such studies are years away.

Conversely, Travis also said the changing conditions might make bayside growth desirable in selected locations. Large-scale projects could serve as a sort of buffer to what already exists on landfill. "We need a more nuanced approach" rather than simply banning bayside growth, Travis suggested. "There's a lot of low-lying development we need to protect ... we need a new type of more resilient development." Inland development patterns also could shift because of efforts to trim greenhouse gas levels.

For decades, critics have complained suburban sprawl covers farmland and causes air pollution because of increased automobile use. They now point out that those long commutes boost the amount of vehicle miles traveled - a major factor in carbon emissions. Also, inland housing tracts tend to be in communities where summers are hotter, boosting energy consumption per capita.

The flip side: Much of this sprawl has occurred because of growth limits imposed by cities near the bay. But according to regional planning officials, older communities are becoming more receptive to infill development.

Higher-density growth

At the forum, Ken Kirkey of the Association of Bay Area Governments described how 50 jurisdictions have applied for grants that would be used to help map higher-density growth in neighborhoods near bus and rail lines. Together, these areas contain space for 395,000 housing units - 50 percent of the region's projected housing needs through 2035. Afterward, Kirkey said climate change alone won't cause people to change their attitudes on growth. What's new is an understanding of local land use's larger ramifications.

"There's a willingness to discuss the way we grow because of climate change," said Kirkey, ABAG's planning director. "People get the connection." As for what comes next, "This is a region that thinks of itself as a leader," Kirkey said. "If we want to be a leader in responding to climate change, we can't just buy Priuses. We need to talk about where and how we live."

FIVE YEARS IN AND NOTHING'S CHANGED

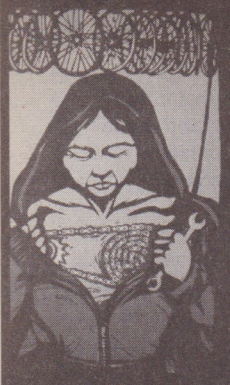
From an article on indymedia.org

On the 5th anniversary of the Iraq invasion, anti-war protesters across the United States stepped up actions of civil disobedience to make their voices heard. From Washington, DC to San Francisco to Boston, hundreds of people were arrested while blockading streets; targeting federal buildings, corporate headquarters and military recruitment stations; and participating in walkouts. Thousands more participated in vigils and support demonstrations.

These actions followed what is probably the most significant and underreported anti-war action in the last 5-years — the Iraq Veterans Against the War's "Winter Soldier" hearings. For four days in Washington, DC, former US military who were in Iraq and Afghanistan testified about US war crimes in the two wars and dramatically condemned the Bush administration and Pentagon for starting the wars. "Winter Soldier" hearings were first held in 1971 in DC by the Vietnam Veterans Against The War and were pivotal in bringing the Vietnam War to an end. This year's hearings were broadcast live on the internet and they were seen by the public at many locations organized by anti-war activists in multiple states; however, the IVAW Winter Soldier was largely ignored by most corporate media.

The last few weeks also saw scattered nationwide protests against the war on International Women's Day. These mass actions follow a year of innovation in the anti-war movement, including the successful targeting of military recruitment centers, corporations and war shipment operations in port cities; as well as the continual gathering of thousands of weekly and monthly peace vigils nationwide (see Eagle Rock, CA, Washington County, OR).

The latest poll in March showed that 65 percent of Americans are opposed to the war in Iraq, yet coverage of the anti-war movement by corporate media has continued to decline. Organizers and independent media workers are working to counter that silence. A statement released by students in Portland, OR, reads: "We as students also believe that anti-war efforts have been too moderate and passive to make a difference."



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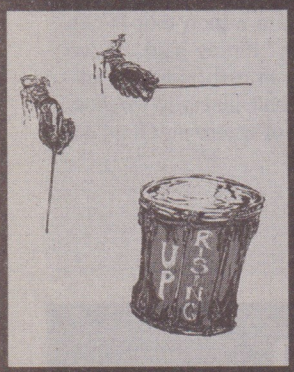

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It's been a few years since the last Pittsburgh scene report in *MRR*, so I figured it was time for an update. When I moved here in April of 2007 a lot of people asked me, "Why are you moving to Pittsburgh?" The info that follows is definitely many of the reasons!

City Info

Pittsburgh is located in the western most part of Pennsylvania, with lots of major cities like Philly, DC, Baltimore, Buffalo, Cleveland and Columbus just a few hours drive away. It's is a small city (300,000 people or so and declining!), so it's easy to get around for the most part, especially if you have access to a vehicle. Biking or walking around the city is easy for the most part too—you just have to avoid the many, many hills. It's has a pretty cheap cost of living, people are typically friendly, and there's fun stuff going on frequently, especially when it's nice out.

Bands

Tons of great new bands have recently formed, and I feel like 2008 is going to be a *breakout year*, with a lot of new records coming out by bands from the 'Burgh. I strongly urge you to check out all of the bands listed below! Since Pittsburgh is small, you'll notice that a lot of bands share members or are ex-members of other bands. I'll also preface this report by saying that I tried to make this report as comprehensive as possible…but I'm sure I forgot a few things!

ABYSME is a couple of dudes who previously played in a bunch of well-known Pittsburgh bands that got together to start a killer black metal band reminiscent of DEATHSPELL OMEGA. Their demo will likely be released by the time you read this.

ALLIES has been around for a few years but recently cemented a new lineup and released an album that is out now. They remind me a bit of the Gainesville sound (AKA bands on the No Idea record label) and sound a bit like TRUE NORTH.

AURYN is a new band that just recently released a demo and played a few out of town shows…they have been described on a flyer as "Euro crust meets '90s hardcore," and sound somewhat like the Spanish band EKKAIA.

BABY BIRD is the brainchild of some members of MIDNIGHT SNAKE, THE MODEY LEMON, KIM PHUC, and SLICES, and they play some seriously heavy, weirdo punk... always fun live too. They released a demo a while ago, and hopefully will put out a record soon.

BEHIND ENEMY LINES features the unmistakable vocals of Dave from AUS ROTTEN. They released a second LP in 2007 on Profane Existence, toured a bunch, and added a new guitarist to the lineup.

BLOOD VESSELS TO WIRES are fast crust punks who do the dual male/female vocals tradeoff well and toured a bit this year with APPALACHIAN TERROR UNIT from nearby West Virginia.

BRAIN HANDLE recently released an LP on No Way Records, and is still playing some outsider '80s inspired hardcore. Members are also playing in a bunch of other bands including REPTILE and SHIT MAYOR.

CAUSTIC CHRIST is still going strong, despite currently being on hiatus for a little while. Guitarist Bill got married in July '07 and gave his wife Rachel the present of a PIST reunion show/fest with a great lineup of bands from all over the country. Let's hope it happens again on their anniversary.

DO CRIMES is a new straight up fast hardcore band with some seriously shredding leads. They will also have a demo out by the time you read this.

THE FITT plays a style that reminds me of a mixture of NIRVANA's *Bleach* and garage punk. They have two 7"s out.

Locals FULL COLOR also plays a similar style, yet perhaps with the NIRVANA influence turned up a notch more.

FLAK recently self-released an LP of fast, crusty hardcore punk on their own label and did a two week tour of the west coast with fellow burners ANNIHILATION TIME.

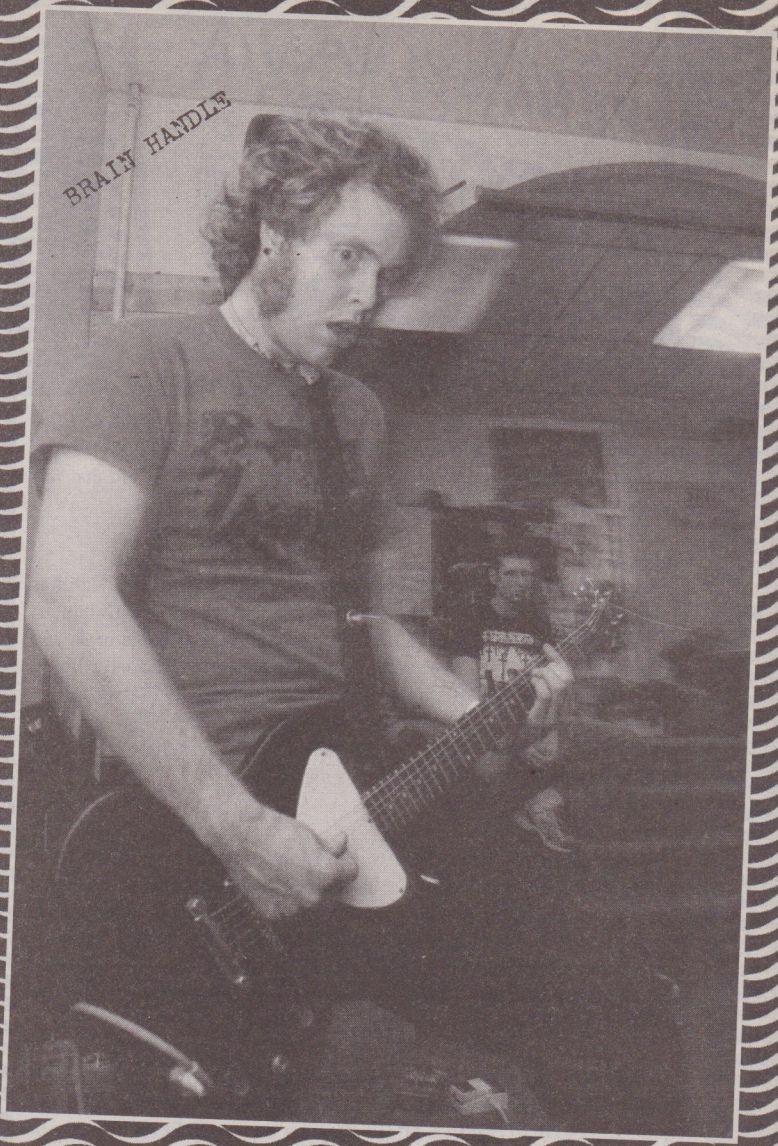
ICON GALLERY features the former singer and bassist of DIE SCREAMING and are usually compared to a mixture of POST REGIMENT and HEART. They have a demo out now and a 7" to be released soon. Their drummer Kevin also plays in the power pop band THE TEST PATTERNS, who have released two 7"s on Contaminated Records and Shit Sandwich.

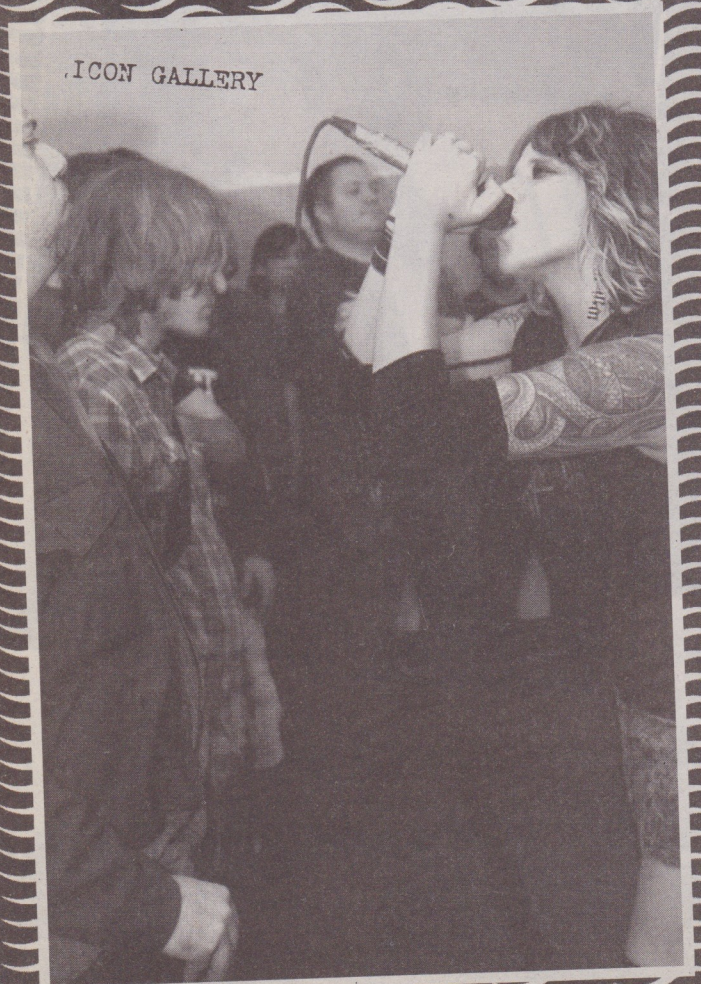
KIM PHUC maintains an original style of dark punk that is sometimes reminiscent of THE WIPERS or some of the bands that have come out of the Danish scene in recent years. They added Corey from CAUSTIC CHRIST on bass in the last year or so. They just put out a self-released 7".

MICROWAVES is still together and damaging ears after nearly a decade. Loud, bass heavy, and sometimes bordering on grind or noise; they would fit in well on a show with bands from the Providence scene like CHINESE STARS. They have a bunch of releases, including a full length on Crucial Blast Records.

MUD CITY MANGLERS is, along with OUT COLD, probably the most overlooked, longest running band I can think of. They play some really catchy garage punk rock and if you're lucky you might catch them live.

NIGHT TERROR is possibly the loudest band in Pittsburgh. They play some heavy as shit stoner-hardcore, a modern comparison being California's BRAINOIL. They also have a demo out now, but have recently recorded for a proper release.





OH SHIT THEY'RE GOING TO KILL US is Pittsburgh's resident speed/thrash metal, dual guitar attack. They recently released an LP on Dear Skull Records and completed a tour of the East Coast.

PLASTERED BASTARDS released a CD of fast, drunken punk rock in 2007. They share some members that also play in SUBMACHINE (who still play the occasional show when they feel like it).

PYRAMID SCHEME has two self-released 7"s of straight-up fast hardcore punk, and recently did some east coast dates with NIGHT TERROR. A couple of members also play in PARTY TERRORISTS.

REDFOX features members of NIGHT TERROR and FLAK and plays killer punk with some rock influences. Hopefully they will release a demo soon.

ROT SHIT plays some fucked up garage punk similar to Wimpy-era QUEERS. They recently released a new 7" on Fashionable Idiots Records and toured the Midwest for a couple weeks. Members also play in the pop punk/garage band THE BURNDOWNS.

SLICES started after the breakup of WARZONE WOMYN. Mantooth and Ovens joined forces with the brothers Kazunik to play some ear-damaging hardcore, which sounds like MELVINS meets NEANDERTHAL. Their demo will be released soon. Bass player Mike also plays solo *folk noise* as TUSK LORD and has released a few CDs.

SOFT SICKLE features dudes from BRAIN HANDLE and the recently split up HTML. These guys play hardcore with some melodic under-

tones (think SWIZ or other stuff from '80s DC scene). Hopefully they will have some kind of release out soon.

THRAK is young kids from Homer City, PA, playing some blistering '90s-style power violence. They have a recently released 7" on Give Praise Records. *Slime of Power*!

UNREAL CITY is a heavy hardcore/metal act in the INTEGRITY vein, and recently recorded a full-length album, to be released soon. Crushing live show to boot.

WRATHCOBRA plays D-beat crust 'n' roll reminiscent of DISFEAR or SKITSYSTEM. Some members also play in BEYOND THUNDERDOME and OH SHIT…

Band Contacts

A lot of the bands mentioned have MySpace pages or other similar websites that should be easily found with any Internet search engine. This is probably the best way to hear and/or contact most of the bands mentioned. If there are any bands you can't find via the internet, or if you don't have access to a computer and want to check something out, don't hesitate to email or write me a letter, and I'll get you in touch with them.

Record Stores

The Attic is across the 40th Street bridge into Millvale. When you get there you'll start digging through thousands of used records. It's somewhat unorganized, so go with a list, otherwise you will be staring at stacks of records for hours. It's located at 513 Grant Street in Millvale, Pennsylvania.

Dave's Music Mine has both new and used stuff. The address is 1210 E Carson Street and it's in the South Side of Pittsburgh.

The Exchange is mostly used CDs with a small vinyl selection where you might find a score if you're lucky. The store has three locations, 1709 E Carson Street in the South Side, 2904 W Liberty Avenue in Dormont, and 5858 Forbes Avenue in Squirrel Hill.

Jerry's Records is the best place to go if you only have time to visit one record store in Pittsburgh. Lots and lots of used stuff, and they also carry stereo components and record player needles. The location is 2136 Murray Avenue in Squirrel Hill.

Paul's CDs has lots of CDs, and a small but good vinyl selection. You will find them at 4526 Liberty Avenue in Bloomfield.

Wicked Discs just recently opened in the space former locations of Brave New World record store. They have a large selection of new and used, punk and metal, vinyl and CDs. Located at 406 S Craig Street in Oakland.

Venues/Bars/Showspaces

It's cheaper to go out drinking in Pittsburgh than most cities if you like that sort of thing…most bars have different nightly specials, so be sure to ask a local punk.

The 31st Street Pub has a really loud sound system and is home to the occasional cool show with bands like DEAD MOON, THE QUEERS, etc. The address is 3101 Penn Avenue in the Strip District.

Belvedere's is a huge VFW style dive bar that hosts 21-and-up shows and occasionally allows all ages or matinee shows. Tuesday is punk night and Thursday night is '80s night. It's located at 4016 Butler Street in Lawrenceville.

Bloomfield Bridge Tavern (BBT) is the place to drink $1 beers outside in the summertime, lots of shows and cheap Polish food too. It's located at 4412 Liberty Avenue in Bloomfield.

Garfield Artworks is an all ages venue with mostly indie shows. The address is 4931 Penn Ave in Garfield.

Gooski's is a small but popular bar that gets really packed when they have shows. Their address is 3117 Brereton Street in Polish Hill.

Kelly's Bar has a retro atmosphere and good food. Punk night is every other Wednesday. Their location is 6012 Penn Circle S in East Liberty.

The Lava Lounge is home to the extremely cheap Meatball Mondays and Taco Tuesdays with both vegan and meat options. They also have an occasional show. You will find them at 2204 E Carson St. in the South Side.

The Mr. Roboto Project is an all ages, DIY, volunteer run show space. It's going on eight-plus years—since 1999. They're located at 722 Wood St in Wilkinsburg.

Modern Formations is an art gallery that has the occasional all ages show. It's a cool space. Their address is 4919 Penn Ave in Garfield.

The Rock Room is a dive bar with the occasional show and cheap drinks. You can find them at 1054 Herron Ave in Polish Hill.

The Smiling Moose is a punk/metalhead run 21-and-up bar with free admission. Bands get paid out of the bar sales. Thursday night is Metal DJ night. They're located at 1306 E Carson St. in the South Side.

Other Stuff to Check Out

On Tuesday, AIR is open studio day where you can pay $5 to use pre-coated, ready to burn screens, and then silkscreen to your heart's desire…BYOT (Bring Your Own Transparency). This place is home to the occasional show sometimes too. You will find them at 518 Foreland Street in the North Side or www.artistsimageresource.org

The Big Idea Bookstore is Pittsburgh's own DIY, volunteer-run infoshop with a big selection of new and used books, zines and artwork. Visit them at 504 Millvale Avenue in Bloomfield or check www.thebigideapgh.org

Board.NeverTellMeTheOdds.org is the local internet message board. It's good to check for upcoming shows, events and general stupidity.

Book 'Em! is a books-to-prisoners project, and meets every Sunday afternoon at the Thomas Merton Center to pack books. Contact bookem@indypgh.org for more info.

Do It! PGH is a monthly events calendar available in print at various spots around town, email doitpgh@gmail.com for details.

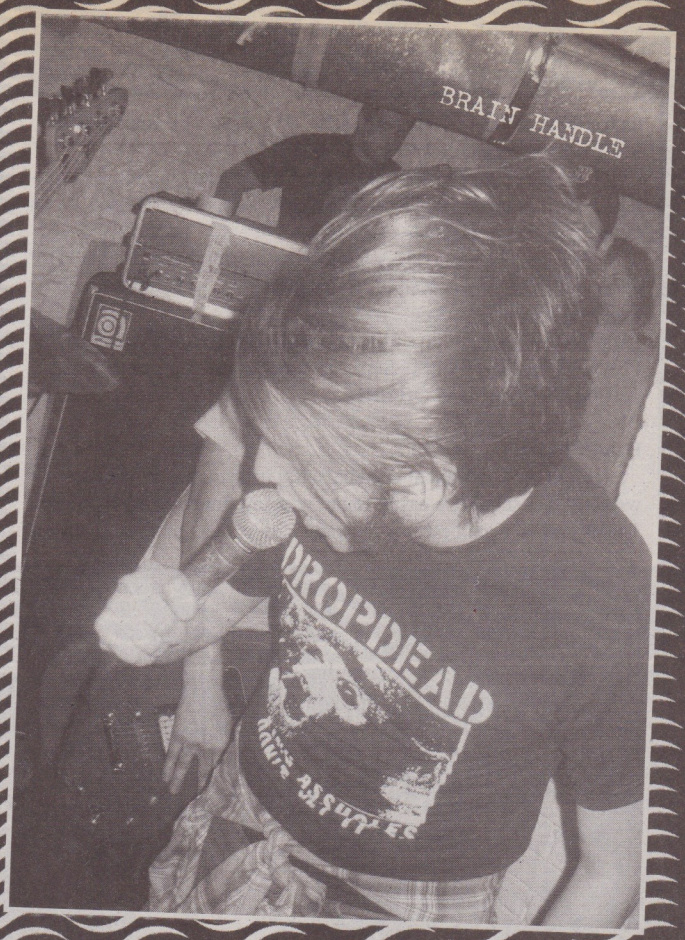
Food Not Bombs serves at 2:30PM Sundays at Market Square (Downtown) and 6:30PM Wednesdays on the North Side. Email pittsburgh_fnb@yahoo.com for more info.

Fossil Free Fuel is a shop of local punk mechanics who convert diesel cars to run on used vegetable oil. You can find them at 223 Braddock Avenue in Braddock, PA or www.fossilfreefuel.com.

Free Ride is a recycled bike program where you can build and learn about bikes for free. They're located at 214 N Lexington Avenue (inside Construction Junction warehouse) in Point Breeze or you can check www.freeridepgh.org and www.bike-pgh.org to find out more info.

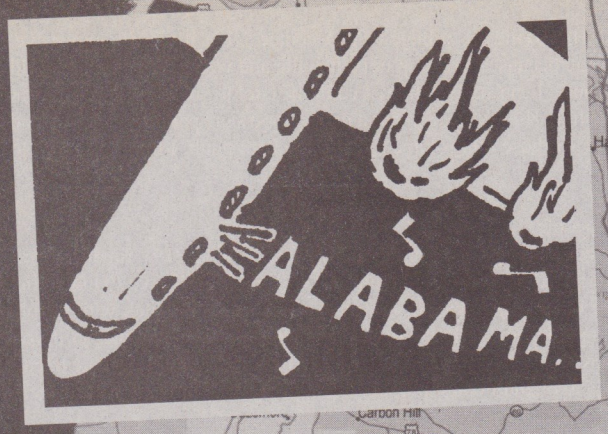
Our local Indymedia news website is www.indypgh.org.

Thomas Merton Center is a community-organizing center, and home to 26 different activist organizations. They publish the *New People* monthly newsletter. They're located at 5125 Penn Avenue in Garfield. Their website is www.thomasmertoncenter.org.



The Wall is good for hanging out, eating fries and pizza, and heckling college dudes. Not as much of a hangout/meeting spot as in the past, but you'll still see punks and/or bike messengers at this spot when it's nice out… Join the Pittsburgh punx campaign to bring back the Wall hang in 2008! The Wall is across the street from "The O," at the corner of Forbes Avenue and Bouquet Street in Oakland.

GET IN TOUCH!
Kyle F. / PO Box 10223 / Pittsburgh PA 15232
crushkyledestroy@hotmail.co



I'm sure it's been awhile since the last *MRR* Huntsville, Alabama scene report. The last one probably mentioned bands like JOEY TAMPON AND THE TOXIC SHOCKS, RICE HARVESTER, THE AUTOBOTS, THE JAWAS, and THE PEEPS. Those bands aren't around anymore but there's still a good and interesting punk rock scene going on here in Huntsville. And while a lot of people have bad things to say about this town, it's not like it was in the '90s, and more bands have been discovering how awesome this town is and have been coming here.

Bands:

THOMAS FUNCTION is probably the best-known band right now from Huntsville. They play really awesome garage influenced pop songs. If they play your city you should go to the show. They have four great 7"s out now on various labels and they should have an LP coming out on It's Alive! Records in March. They also own a really cool bus with a bunch of couches in it. It's big and orange.

VANDAMMIT!!!! Is one of my favorite Huntsville bands at the moment. They haven't played too much outside of Huntsville so people around the region haven't heard of them, but they play a lot in town. Their sound is hardcore-ish punk. Sometimes it reminds me of a cross between FUCKED UP and ASTRID OTO. Their sets are usually short and fun. Their most memorable show was with CLOROX GIRLS at the Tavern downtown. It was one of those "fuck yeah shows that you see every now and then that remind you why you go to shows.

THE DASTARDLY DO-NOTHINGS are young. They youngest member is 15 and they play shows all around the region. Their sound is surprisingly mature. It sounds similar to another local band called THE COUNTERCLOCKWISE. I'm not sure how to describe their style of music—we call them a punk rock band—but it's something more than that. Judge for yourself when they play your living room.

THE PINE HILL HAINTS are actually probably better known than THOMAS FUNCTION, but they're not 100% from Huntsville. Members Jamie and Katie live in Florence, Alabama, which is only an hour and a half away, but the other half of the band, Ben and Matt, live in town. THE PINE HILL HAINTS play old-timey country music with an amazing live show. They tour all the time and have a record out on K Records (wow!). Go them when they play a show in your town. You'll thank me after your done dancing your heart out. Jamie used to be in a band that you might have heard of called THE WEDNESDAYS.

THE COUNTERCLOCKWISE is really hard to explain. Here's the set-up: two drummers, a banjo player, a guitarist, and a dude that plays a bass made out of an ice cream maker. They banjo drives their punk sound, which is really exciting. It features half of THE PINE HILL HAINTS plus a few other people. I don't think they tour as much as they used to but they had this really cool musical play last year called *The Year of the Gun*. They toured this south performing this play so you might have caught that. A lot of people in THE COUNTERCLOCKWISE are involved in the Crash Boom Bang theater collective that puts on a new play at least once a month and usually produces interesting results. Definitely worth checking out if you travel through Huntsville.

NESTOR MAKHNO is my band so I dunno if I should be talking about it but we are from Huntsville. The band is a two-piece with guitar and drums, and we play pop punk/region roc—I guess that's what you call it. Get in touch and I'll send you a tape.

ANDY DALE PETTY plays folk music by himself and it's amazing. I'm not talking about folk punk, but traditional southern folk music. Maybe he doesn't fit into *MRR*, but his songs are really great and apparently made King Khan flip his shit, so they might do the same for you. Andy has a record coming out on Voodoo Rhythm Records out of Switzerland and word on the street is that he's doing some touring with KING KHAN AND HIS SHRINES this summer, so lookout for all of that.

THE SUGAR GLIDERS includes Andy playing garage rock with some members of THOMAS FUNCTION. So far they've played a few shows. One with THE GOODNIGHT LOVING and another with TULSA. They haven't recorded but hope to soon.

Record labels:

Two records labels currently operate out of Huntsville. One is called Sunburst Records and they've put out two 7"s so far; one by THE PINE HILL HAINTS and another by THE CUTTERS (a side project of Sean from DIGITAL LEATHER). The other label is called DNH Records. They've put out for 7"s with releases by THOMAS FUNCTION, PERIOD 3, TRUTHDEALER, RANDOM HOUSES, WE MARCH, and KILL THE HIPPIES, and all of those records are worth getting. Word on the street I that label head, David, is putting out a discography of North Alabama punk rock. I'm super excited for that to come out. I run a tape label and am working with Jordan from ROCK PAPER STUPID on a region rock tape to be released in the near future.

Venues:

This one of the bad things about Huntsville—there's a few places that usually hold shows three or four times a month, but sometimes a shit ton of people contact us for shows. Summers are usually the best (more people go on tour then)— the shows then tend to be good, and a lot of people seem to be coming out for them.

As far as all ages venues go, the only place we really have is called The Flying Monkey Arts Center. It's located in the old shoe mill in West Huntsville. I think it's a good

place for shows, but they don't only hold punk shows, so it's kind of hard to get a last minute show set up there. The venue also screen films, Crash Boom Band performs plays there, and every Saturday they have an artist's market where local artists can sell their work and shit. The second floor contains a record store that has a really good selection and is worth visiting if you're in Huntsville. It's called Vertical House Records, and they also have shows there from time to time. Last show there was THE JACUZZI BOYS from Miama.

A few places that hold 21 and up shows that are actually pretty easy for underage kids to sneak into. I've been going to these kinds of shows since I was 16 and have never had a problem getting in. We've had shows at the Tavern but after BLACK RAINBOW, LOUIS TULLY, MAD SWIRL, and THOMAS FUNCTION played there the place got super fucked, and I'm sure that they're not going to have punk shows anymore. Whatever, it's not that great of a bar anyway. We've also had a few shows at the Nook. They sell like 88 different types of beer and they're all $3.50, so you can try something that's normally expensive for a reasonable price. I was living in Worcester, Massachusetts when DIGITAL LEATHER played at the Nook, but I heard it was a pretty good show. The only show I've seen there was VANDAMMIT!! and THE LIGHTBULBS, but I thought it was kind of strange that they left the lights on when the bands played. They have a really funny stage with a mirror, so you can see yourself when the bands play.

House shows are very sporadic in Huntsville. The house I live in, the Battlefield, does shows. So far we've had a few shows such as HARRY AND THE POTTERS, TULSA, and we threw a huge ass New Year's Eve party with a bunch of outta towners like CHEAP TIME, THE MAHONIES, FONTANA, WAX MUSEUMS, and PLEXI 3. It was *really awesome*, and I can't wait for the next one!

Zines:

Only a few zines are being produced in Huntsville right now. Travis from THOMAS FUNCTION writes a zine called *Drop Dead Dumb*. You can order issue #1 from him. It's a hand drawn comic book that's really well done. I write a zine called *Asa Nisi Masa*. I've released three issues, and you can get a copy of it from me. I will trade for your zine or you can send a dollar or a stamp.

Other cool shit in Huntsville:

Bandito Burrito Co. is a Mexican restaurant that a lot of punks have worked at over the years. The food is pretty cheap and they have vegan options. It more Tex-Mex than actual Mexican food, but it's still good. It's close enough to the Flying Monkey, so you can walk to a show after your meal.

If you're interested in tourist shit, I could take you to the Space and Rocket Center. There you can learn about the history of the space program and shit because Huntsville has a huge NASA center… but it's really expensive, and for me it's kind of boring because I grew up in Huntsville and went there on many field trips during elementary school. I can still see how it could be cool to someone that wants to learn about rockets and the like. Huntsville also has a pretty good state park for camping and hiking and although neither of those things have much to do with punk, I think it's good to note.

How to get in touch with people:

For help with a show you can call me (David) at 256-603-3219. Email me at dhale@clarku.edu or send me a letter at David Hale / 3178 Battlefield Drive / Huntsville, AL 35810. If you feel like braving the beast of myspace, you can get in touch with people at www.myspace.com/huntsvilleshows. Huntsville is super close to Chattanooga, so if you want help with a show there or want to come here after you play there, don't hesitate to call me. I go up to Chattanooga a lot and I could probably help your band out with a show there too.

To hear bands:
THOMAS FUNCTION: www.myspace.com/thomasfunction
VANDAMMIT!!!!: www.myspace.com/vandammitrocks
THE DASTARDLY DO-NOTHINGS: www.myspace.com/dastardlydonothings
THE PINE HILL HAINTS: www.myspace.com/pinehillhaints
THE COUNTERCLOCKWISE: don't have a myspace but google them to find information

NESTOR MAKHNO: www.myspace.com/nestormakhnoalabama (myspace sucks and we're going to get rid of it soon, I promise!)
ANDY DALE PETTY: www.myspace.com/andrewrodneybryant
THE SUGAR GLIDERS: don't have anything on the internet at the moment…

For zines:
Drop Dead Dumb
2214 Beasley Ave. NW
Huntsville, AL 35816

Asa Nisi Masa
3718 Battlefield Drive
Huntsville, AL 35810

Other addresses:
Flying Monkey Arts Center/ Vertical House Records
2211 Seminole Drive
Huntsville, AL 35805

Bandito Burrito Co.
3017 Governer's Drive
Huntsville, AL 35805

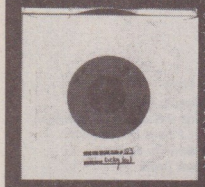
Sunburst Records
3718 Battlefield Drive
Huntsville, AL 35810

DNH Records
www.myspace.com/dnhrecords

Come to Huntsville! We need more people and bands passing through! What we really need is for people to move here so if ya wanna become part of a pretty exciting DIY community, I suggest you come check out Huntsville. Get in touch punx!

KEEPING THE TRADITION ALIVE

DISC 102: GEORGETOWN CRAFTS.
SEATTLE SKINHEAD REGGAE GROUP AT THE PEAK OF THEIR GRITTY BEST. ONE SCORCHING INSTRUMENTAL AND ONE VOCAL CLASSIC.



DISC 103: LUCKY SOUL
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Add $4.60 if you choose PRIORITY MAIL.

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D.O.A. "Triumph Of The Ignoroids" 7" $5
Breaks "...Are Broke" 7" $3.50 (Firestarter Records)
Drama "Creacion Destructiva" 7" $3.50
F "Four from '84" 7" $3 (FL punk legends, Burrito Recs)
F "The Danger Is Here" CD-r$8.50 (1984, 9 songs)
F "Raw Bones" CD $8.50-r (All new studio album)
Pedestrians "Ideal Divide" LP $8.50 or CD $8.50
Intifada "First To Terrorize" 7" $3.50
Inslolentes/Tras De Nada 7" $3.50
Primates "El Camino De La Obedienca" 7" $3.50 (Spain)
Final Draft "S/T" 7" $3.50 (Give Praise Records)
Mostros "Vacillatio Et Revolvo" LP $10 (Spain)
Acursed "Tunnelin I Ljusets Slut" LP $10 or CD $12
Iron Lung "Sexless//No Sex" LP $10 or CD $12
Kylesa "S/T" LP $10 (Prank Records)
Jean Mills Society Torch "Start Tomorrow" 7" $3.50
Spark/Death Cycle 7" $3.50
Gagfactors "We Rock You Suck" 7" $5 (Italy)
Derrota/Ambulance 7" $5 (Spain)
Derrota/Horror 7" $5 (Spain)
Discharge "War Is Hell" LP $13.50
Holocaust In Your Head LP $12 (Spain)
Iron Batasuna/Destierro 7" $5 (Spain)
Looking For An Answer/Zanussi 7"$5 (Spain)
Karnvapen Attack "Kunst Und Unkunst" LP $12 (Spain)
Karnvapen Attack/Disundead 7" $5 (Spain)
Makiladoras/Radio Bikini 7" $5
Raiser/Forced March 7" $5
Totalickers/Holocaust In Your Head 7" $5 (Spain)
Yakuza Horror 7" $5 (Spain)
War/System "Incoming!" 7" $3.50
Abrasive Wheels "Nothing To Prove" CD $12
Bad Dirty Hate "100%" 7" $5 (Japan)
Ballast "Fuse" CD $10
Blitz "Blitz Hits" CD $12 (23 songs)
Catheter/Massgrave CD $10 (15 songs. Soooo grindy)
Civil Terror "Surrounded By Assholes" LP $10 (Holland)
Constant State Of Terror "Missing Limbs" 7" $5 (UK)
Final Conflict "Ashes To Ashes" CD $12
Fix My Head "S/T" 7" $5
Foolocracy LP $10 (Czech Republic)
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Hibakusha "S/T" LP $10 (Czech Republic)
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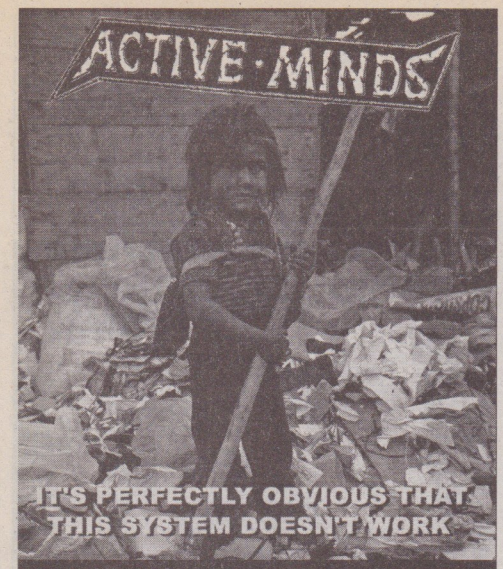

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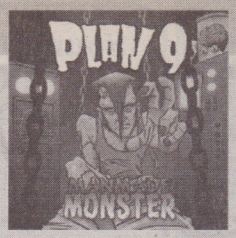

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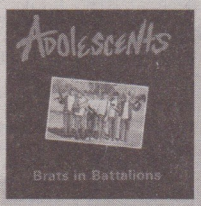

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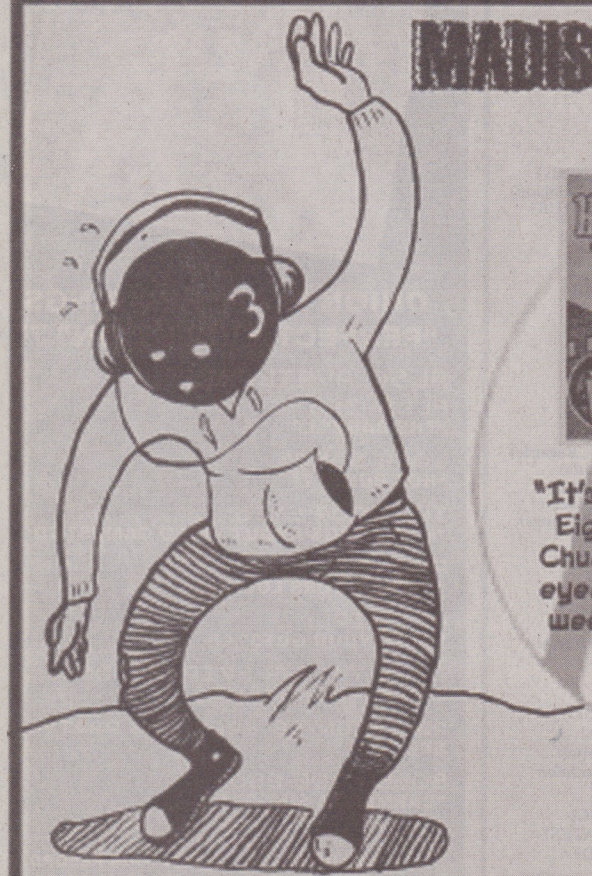

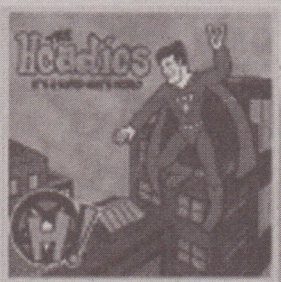

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RED DONS

DOUGLAS OF THE OBSERVERS' NEW BAND. IN THE LAST TWO YEARS, THE RED DONS HAVE RELEASED A 7" EP AND A FULL-LENGTH LP, AND HAVE TOURED EUROPE. BASED OUT OF PORTLAND, OREGON, THE BAND HAS A FLUID LINE-UP, AND AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER HAS INCLUDED CURRENT AND FORMER MEMBERS OF THE OBSERVERS, THE CLOROX GIRLS, AUTISTIC YOUTH, DEFECT DEFECT, NO SECRETS BETWEEN SAILORS, AND MKOE. THE FOLLOW INTERVIEW WITH FOUNDING MEMBERS DOUGLAS AND HAJJI WAS CONDUCTED BY PACO MUS. PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATEUS MONDINI.

MRR: Red Dons is the continuation of The Observers. Doug wrote most songs for The Observers and now does in Red Dons. Can you explain how The Observers came to an end and how Red Dons got together?

Douglas: All I can decipher about the demise of The Observers is that our friendships simply fell apart and so the band quickly followed. Sadly, I don't know all the specific events that lead to the end of the band because I was never included in discussions about breaking up the group. A few days after the guys quit, I asked if they would record two final songs that Kashani and I wrote together. They voted not to and that made it difficult for me to find closure with the project.

It put me in a unique and unfortunate situation. Being the main songwriter and lead singer of the group, I was encouraged by a large number of people to find new members and continue on with the band. The Observers were my life, and I was caught off guard by the others leaving, so I seriously considered reforming the group. I just wasn't ready for the band to end.

Hajji and I started practicing Observers songs with our first drummer, and Justin came along later after we had worked a little with other guitarists like Adam Becker of Autistic Youth and Defect Defect. Ultimately, we changed the name because after practicing together and discussing ideas for future recordings, we realized the group had taken on an identity of its own. Coming to that point was a year-long process where we endured defamation and were ostracized in the punk scene. It wasn't a fun time.

What's interesting is that the Red Dons are a project that in theory predates The Observers. Hajji and I had been discussing and planning this ever since 2000 when we lived together in college housing. Back then, the Red Dons were intended to be a side project that would only release 7"s. Each 7" would feature different musicians from various backgrounds making each record diverse in sound and style. We even had a power pop 7" written and ready to go. For example, in 2002, after I moved back to Portland from Germany and Hajji from Jordan, we started working on *Escaping Amman*. The design of the record, its artwork, and the song "West Bank" are all products of that time period before The Observers even formed.

With that said, however, the Red Dons identity has changed because of The Observers. Now, the Red Dons aren't a conceptual side project because they do act as a continuation of The Observers. Some of the original ideas we had for the project have remained, though. One of our main objectives is that the band acts as a sort of collective much like Crass did. With people free to come and go as they please, the band can still collaborate with musicians we admire as well as play whatever we'd like to. It is a way to destroy the rules of punk and frees us up to do many different things.

MRR: I know this may be a touchy subject, but I am dead curious about why do you still play Observers songs live and have even re-recorded some on the first Red Dons LP. What was the reaction of the other Observers members? Is that something temporal until you got more songs or do you feel like those songs belong to you?

Douglas: Well, "Walk Alone" is the only song that we recorded on the album that was played live or released by The Observers. There is an interview on the Revisions website with *Scene Point Blank* where I talk a little about putting this song on the album. For the most part, *Death to Idealism* was written to be the next Observers album. The *Walk Alone* EP was intended to act as the album's preceding single and the song "Walk Alone" was always going to be the opening track of the album. The Observers were supposed to learn and record the album in 2005 when we got back from Europe—but, as we all know, we never got back from Europe. I debated not putting the song on the album for obvious reasons, but in the end I wanted to see this lost project completed the way it was originally intended to be. Take it for what it is.

As for the way the ex-Observers members feel about it, I can't speak for everyone but Kashani sings back-ups on the Red Dons recording of "Walk Alone" so I'll assume that he's cool with us recording and playing it. Kashani has also expressed to me that he was happy we still recorded those last songs he and I wrote together. He has been supportive of Hajji and I and the Red Dons, and even supported us in the idea of keeping The Observers name.

It's important to note that we aren't playing Observers songs because of a lack of material. In fact, the number of Red Dons songs that we have is so large that not all members know every

song yet. There are many reasons why we play Observers songs live, however. One being that the material is of the same vein, has the same aesthetic, and to me represents one thought or concept that I'm trying to get across. That is why we say the Red Dons are the continuation of The Observers rather than a new band entirely.

Another reason we play those songs is because people request them on a regular basis. Many people never saw The Observers and want to see those songs performed live. I think we've been asked before every show if we would play "Symbols, Slogans, Lies," "Lead Pill," or "Defeated." Because of that, we typically include one or two Observers songs in our set. We all know those songs, so why wouldn't we play them when asked to by the people who paid to see the show? It is surprising to me that some people are sceptical of us for playing those songs when they are not critical of bands like All, Danzig, or even Lou Reed for doing basically the same thing.

Most importantly, I love those songs and the idea of not playing them ever again really depresses me. I still have the same passion for them as I did when I wrote them and I'll be damned if someone's gonna try to prevent me from playing a song I wrote. I don't feel like they belong just to me and I don't object to other people doing the songs too. Hell, even the Clorox Girls have played "Lead Pill" on tour a couple times when it was requested and I think that's great.

I guess the last thing to point out is that when The Observers first formed, we played mostly Speds songs for all the same reasons and no one was opposed to that. That's why it's hard for me to understand the few who oppose it now. The Observers LP has a Speds song on it. The Red Dons LP has an Observers song on it. The next Revisions LP will probably have a Red Dons song on it. I can't state it more obviously, but there is a trend there that some people just aren't catching onto. This whole concept shouldn't be anything controversial.

MRR: Red Dons name themselves after the Cambridge 4. Do you feel any kind of bond with them? Can you explain to us the reason behind the name?

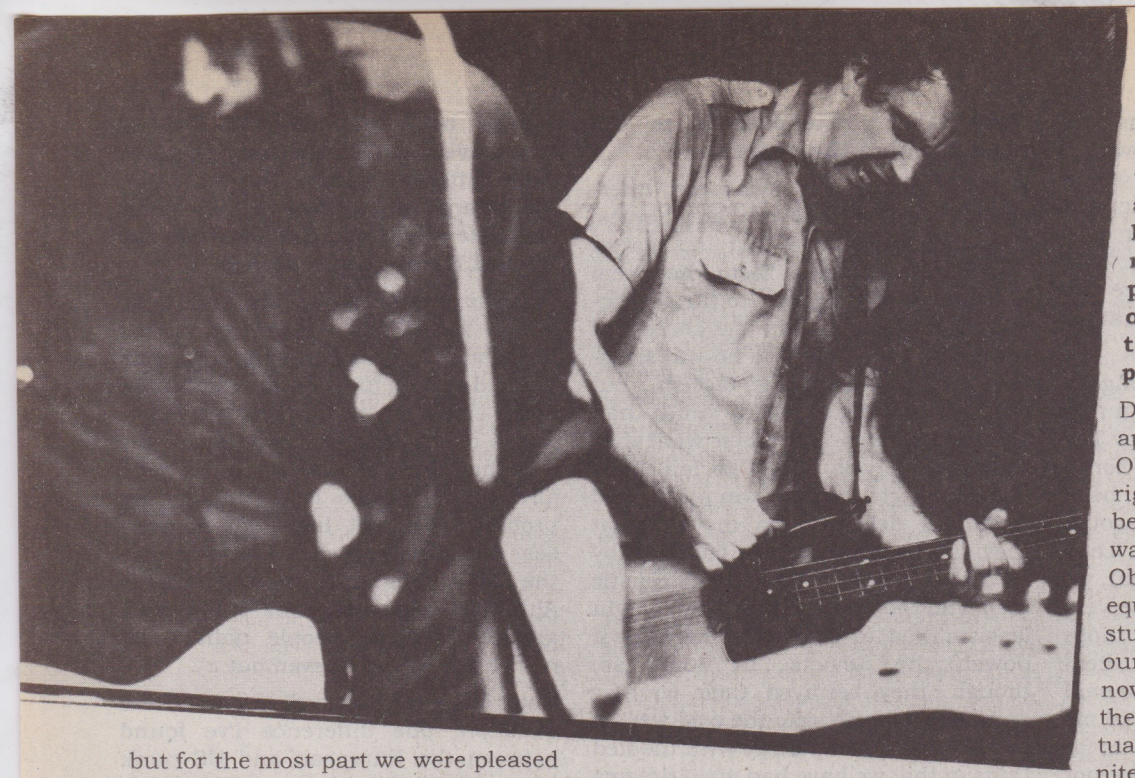
Hajji: I find the Red Dons very interesting because they are anti-heroes. But even more than that, no matter which way you look at them, they seem like bad guys, especially to the governments involved. Within the context of the times, they were in a no-win situation. They were against fascism, but felt democracy lacked, and had Marxist leanings. No matter what they would do, it was bound to fail. They helped our government win a war, and then still defected. No matter what they did, they are seen as bad guys by all sides. These were very idealistic men who thought the best way to fight fascism was to side with the biggest power, the Soviets. In doing so, though, they betrayed their country and helped inaugurate the cold war. In some ways, we empathize with the Red Dons in that we have had great dreams or ideals to live up to, but in the end have seen these dreams crushed, compromised, or changed as one's life evolves—hence *Death to Idealism*, the title of the LP. The reason behind the name has nothing to do with being communist or anti-capitalist; rather it is that we're not on any side. We are not against anyone, either. We're not in this for politics but rather to exorcise our demons and deal with real things that effect us.

MRR: Red Dons just finished a full European tour having only a 7" out. To what extent did the Clorox Girls and Observers tag help? Having toured both the US and Europe extensively during the last few years with different bands, I'm sure you are in a good position to talk about the differences you find between the US and Europe punk scenes.

Douglas: Actually, we did have a LP out in Europe; two, if you count the Revisions LP. Unfortunately, they were delayed getting to us on the road so we didn't have them for the first two weeks of the tour. If it weren't for the fact that three of the four of us were already in Europe last summer, we probably wouldn't have toured overseas as early as we did in order to give the LPs a little more time to circulate. Although the tour went really well, apparently some people didn't ever realize the LPs were even out.

Hajji: Regarding the other part of the question, one difference I've found between the European and US punk scenes is the fact that in Europe they put a description of the band on the flyer and people will come based only on that information. It seems to me people in the US come to shows for the most part because they know the band already, whereas in Europe people will come not only because they know the band but also based on the style of music listed on the flyer.

The Clorox Girls and Observers tag helped a little in that our friends from previous tours came to see us play. A few people were coming for the Clorox Girls link out of curiosity and some were coming outright to hear Observers songs. Some people came just because we were a band on Deranged Records,



but for the most part we were pleased to find most had investigated and heard the band online or already had the 7". In other words, it seemed most people were coming to see the band for what it was and to hear the new material. People requested and sang along to "Incomplete Action," "Everyday Distraction," and "West Bank" just as must as anything else we played.

MRR: What types of people go to your shows? I think you have a pretty crossover audience between garage fans and hardcore kids. A few years ago that was hard to imagine, but in the last few years things have changed a lot in that respect. I always thought that The Observers arrived at a time when bands were concerned about pretty much anything but writing *songs*—and that's what was so fresh about The Observers.

Douglas: Our audience has the same make-up as The Observers crowd—maybe it's even a little more diverse now that we are doing the Revisions too. I agree with you that the punk scene was very segregated around the time The Observers started, and the diversity of our crowd was what I always loved about our shows back then. I'm happy to see more bands appreciated by both the hardcore and garage scenes, but I'm concerned that people are once again caring less and less about songwriting and more about scene politics.

The last two years or so have really demystified the punk world for me by the way the scene seems to constantly revert back to scenester drama to evaluate bands and people. Reviews today seem to deal more with who made the music rather than the music itself. I guess it has always been that way, but it seemed like for a moment there, things could have changed. Maybe that is why we try to experiment with our different music projects and try to connect with different audiences. We feel the way that people within the punk community view music needs to be challenged from time to time. Until the hardcore scene cares more about its music than its social/scenester politics, the bands will remain irrelevant, outdated, and banal. A divided scene playing retro music and concerned with this trivial inner-scene drama is doomed to irrelevance. Punk still has relevance to us. That's why we do what we do.

MRR: You seem to spend a big chunk of the year on the road—how do you manage? I am sure it is hard to have a life, write songs, and not lose your sanity. Is that what makes a difference this days of virtual music?

Hajji: It is hard to spend so much time on the road. One way to manage is to be content with very little. It seems the less you have, the easier it is to travel and be flexible with where you go and what you do. As for having a life, you lose quite a bit at home, but at the same time make so many friends abroad that you start to feel anywhere could be home. Sanity? I think that spending so much time on the road indicates a search for sanity rather than a loss.

MRR: While Red Dons seems to keep a similar musical pattern than The Observers, the lyrics are somewhat different; perhaps more focused, maybe more jaded and political to a point. Do you all discuss them or are they all Doug? Can you talk about the song-writing process?

Douglas: The biggest and most apparent difference between The Observers' and Red Dons' lyrics right now is the collaboration between Hajji and me. Although he was always an influence on The Observers whether it was our equipment choices, working in the studio with us, or simply critiquing our songs, practices, and show—now Hajji takes a more active role in the actual songwriting and conceptual elements of the band. This definitely adds the focus and depth that The Observers often lacked back when I was the only one working on the lyrics.

Hajji has had a very interesting life and lately some of our songs have focused on experiences he had while living in the Middle East. On songs like this, we work out the content of the song together, then I'll write the lyrics and we will revise them until the song is complete. Richie has also been involved in the critiquing process since joining the band.

I guess another reason that the lyrics may seem a little different is that we are also all five years older now and in that time period we have been through some pretty traumatic events in our personal lives. Those events would leave anyone a little more jaded, but more focused too.

MRR: So far you've released a four-track EP and a full-length, both on Canadian label Deranged Records. I believe the LP was recorded in an extremely tight schedule in between tours. Do you feel that that sense of urgency and hectic-ness is in the recordings? How much of that stuff predated the Red Dons days? Also, you have a European press of your LP—how do you think it helps a band having many releases in different countries?

Hajji: Yes, I feel that that sense of urgency and hectic-ness is in the recordings. When I listen to the record, there are things I hear that I could improve upon, or ideas that I had for the songs that didn't hit me until I had

played them for a month on the road. But, in some ways, though, I really enjoy that it was recorded that way. It was very challenging to pull off, but the record is a document of that moment in time. There is no revising what happened and how we felt and played. If we had worked on the LP for a month in the studio, I think it would have a different feel.

Asking how much material predates the Red Dons days is a difficult question to answer because of the inception of the project years ago and how it was then drastically altered to accommodate the break-up of The Observers. As it stands now, the LP has a lot of material that predates the band as we know it today, because the songs were originally written for The Observers. However, a lot of the songs underwent a significant reworking to reflect the new membership and our changing views of life. After the break-up, Doug and I spent a long time working on the new music and a lot of the material has grown from that year of practicing, such as "Hajji Takes A Ride" or "Room 322."

Douglas: It's unfortunate the album had to be recorded under such time constraints, but I guess we have our first drummer to thank for that. He left the band two weeks prior to recording the album. At the time, we were on tour in New York and he flew home without telling anyone. No one even realized he was gone until the end of the night when we were loading up his drums and he sent us a text message from the airport that said he really respected us and hated to leave, but the tour was causing too much stress on his relationship with his girlfriend.

We called up Richie that night and a few days later I left the tour to join him in Portland. The next week was devoted to teaching him the songs, and when Hajji and Justin got back into town about ten days later, we recorded the album. The take of "Everyday Distraction" was the first time the four of us ever played the song together, and I like that because I feel the tension and nervousness we all had while playing the song. That uneasy energy is all over the record and adds to the already existing themes of the artwork, music, and lyrics. Although the situation wasn't ideal, Richie did a great job and I think we all feel we got a much better drummer out of it. Normally, I wouldn't have recorded an album like that, but we needed to record then in order to give the European label enough time to get the LP out in time for our European tour. Basically, we had no other choice but to do it the way we did.

I guess that leads into the next part of your question. It really helps bands to have records pressed in different countries if for no other reason but to keep the price of the records affordable. Shipping costs are outrageously high and often your records don't even arrive. It also makes it easier to get more records when you sell out of copies on tour. Wasted Sounds in Sweden pressed the Revisions and Red Dons LPs for our European tour this year, which was a big help. It should also be noted that Dirtnap and Deranged were very cool about allowing another label to press the records because they knew it was in our best interest to have it done that way. Often labels are more concerned about their potential record sales than the band's needs. Both Ken at Dirtnap and Gord at Deranged willingly sacrificed their bottom line to help us, which is a major reason I like working with those labels.

MRR: All The Observers and Red Dons releases follow somewhat of an aesthetic except for your debut EP. What was that about? I know Doug takes care of the artwork side of things. Do you have some training? Have you done artwork for other bands?

Hajji: Doug is of course the artist who renders the ideas into the form that you see them and is responsible for the overall look of the band. I have been involved in some of the conceptual ideas behind the artwork, which is manifested in the Middle Eastern themes. To me, the artwork reflects the way we work together. The 7" was the first attempt to combine our concepts under Doug's brush. As you can see, the LP has improved upon that melding of ideas.

Douglas: I have a bachelor's degree in art from Portland State University. I guess that's my "training." I haven't done artwork for many other bands. I did an insert once for Autistic Youth, but that's about it. Bands have asked me before to do art for them but I'm usually on the road and my timelines don't match up with their deadlines. I'm always interested in doing art for other bands though.

MRR: Justin's other band Clorox Girls is on BYO. Would Red Dons follow the same steps giving the oppor-

tunity? How important is for the band to remain independent? Do you have an agenda with Red Dons?

Douglas: We have been given opportunities like that already, but I feel most comfortable with Deranged. I just think it is the label that fits the Red Dons best mostly due to examples like I gave earlier. Say what you will, but Gord always has our best interests in mind and I really appreciate that. We are given 100% artistic freedom, he has never pressed the wrong color vinyl, we buy our extra records off him for cheap, he keeps all the records in press and well distributed, has never been late on a deadline once, and most recently he has supported us in our efforts to remix and re-master the LP. I can't say that about many other labels that I myself, or people I know, have worked with. That includes everything from major labels to the smallest independents out there.

Although we aren't trying to get the Red Dons on a larger label, what I find concerning about the discussion regarding majors and large indies is how hypocritical we can be when chastising bands who do sign to those labels. If you're going to criticize a band for corporate distribution, then make sure that your record collection doesn't have any major label recordings and take down your band's MySpace page. If you aren't willing to do that, and most of us aren't, then relax and find someone else to pick on. Aren't there larger issues to confront than how music is distributed?

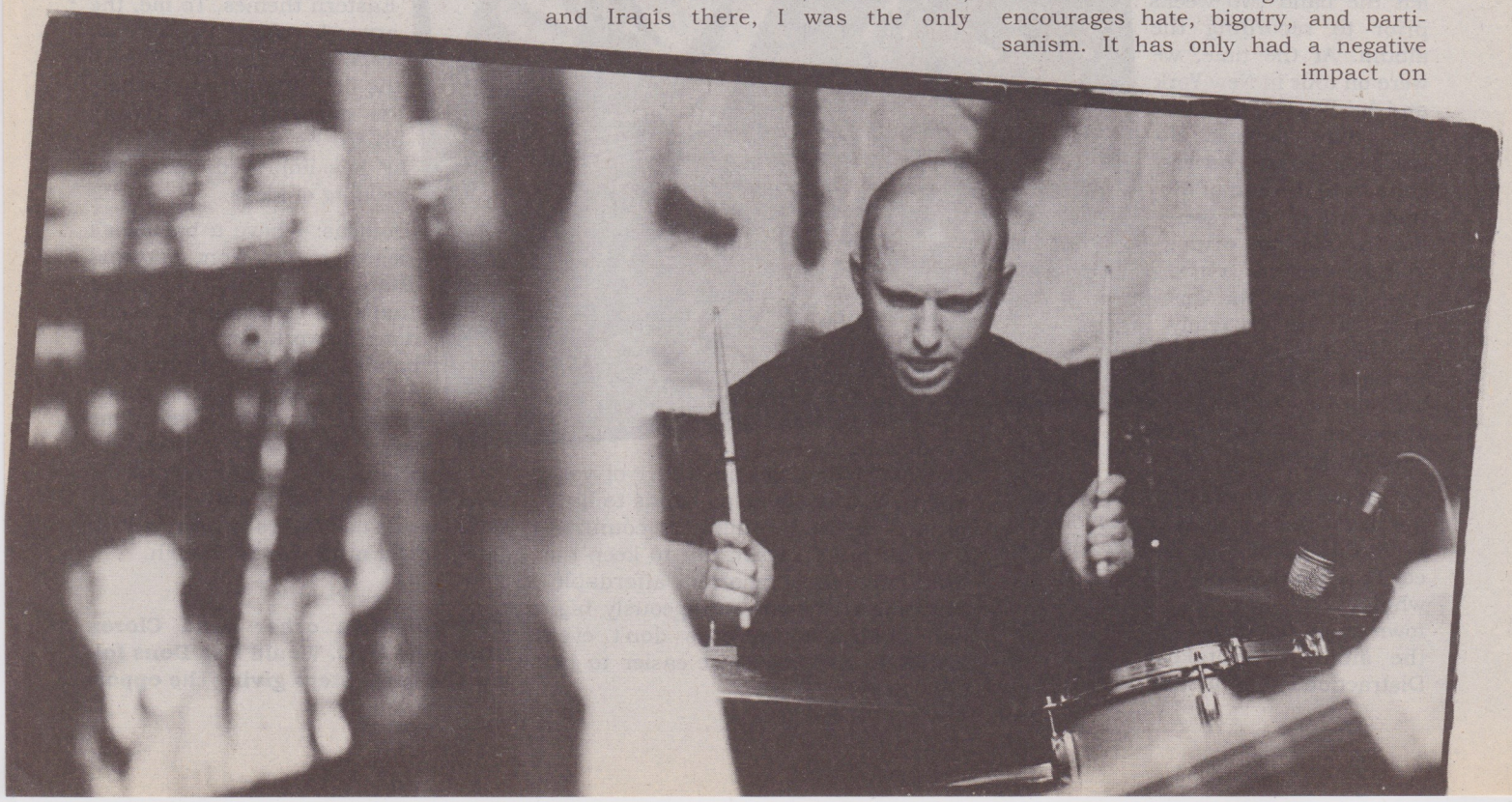
When the Clorox Girls signed to BYO, I supported Justin in that decision because he is my friend and he has always supported me. If that means to some people that I'm somehow guilty by association, then fine. Friends will always mean way more to me than stupid labels and the opinion of punk rock zines. That's not an agenda.

MRR: Danni/Hajji has a Middle Eastern background, and some of the Red Dons songs are about the Middle East conflict, all from a personal point of view. I imagine he is responsible for those ones. Can you tell us a bit about your views on the conflict?

Hajji: I went to Jordan September 1st, 2001 to study. As you can surmise, it was a hectic year in the region. The second Intifada, September 11th, war in Afghanistan, the rise of al-Qaida to international prominence, and the overall instability has contributed a lot to the personal views that come out in our music. For the most part though, what is reflected in the music has nothing to do with politics or the conflict but rather my trying to cope with the experiences I had and the situations I had to deal with. A lot of the songs are concerned with specific events that happened to me, or problems I've had dealing with the effects they have had on my life.

Being one of the few Americans there at a university with 20,000 students gave me a lot of exposure at the time. For some Jordanians, Palestinians, and Iraqis there, I was the only American they came into contact with for venting or expressing their opinions about the politics of our country. Often times when a person's family member would be killed or go missing in the West Bank, I would be the first person they would approach or blame for what happened even though I had nothing to do with the unfortunate circumstances. Beyond that, living in the region at the time put me in a lot of situations out of my control such as riots at the university, anti-American or anti-Israeli demonstrations, bomb threats, bombings, assassinations, anti-government demonstrations, conservative Islamic rallies, and general unrest. It's a strange sensation to walk around a corner into tear gas, police, and fires. I didn't participate in any of the unrest but rather was caught in a lot of it by being in the wrong place at the wrong time. I suppose you could say that about my entire time there. So, much of the songs deal with specific events. Incorporating these experiences or writing about them has been very cathartic in my life and our records are riddled with clues relating to all the things that happened. Not to put a negative light only on my experiences—a lot of amazing things happened and I learned a lot, especially in terms of removing my head from the Western mind-set. In many ways, the art of the LP is a nod of respect to the Arabs.

As for the conflict in particular, overall it's a very frustrating thing to deal with. Not only does it prevent free movement within the region but it also encourages hate, bigotry, and partisanism. It has only had a negative impact on



my life and on the people involved. If you're asking me whether I take sides, the answer is no. I think both sides are wrong and perpetuating the conflict. I think there needs to be a fundamental change in the region or people for anything to be resolved.

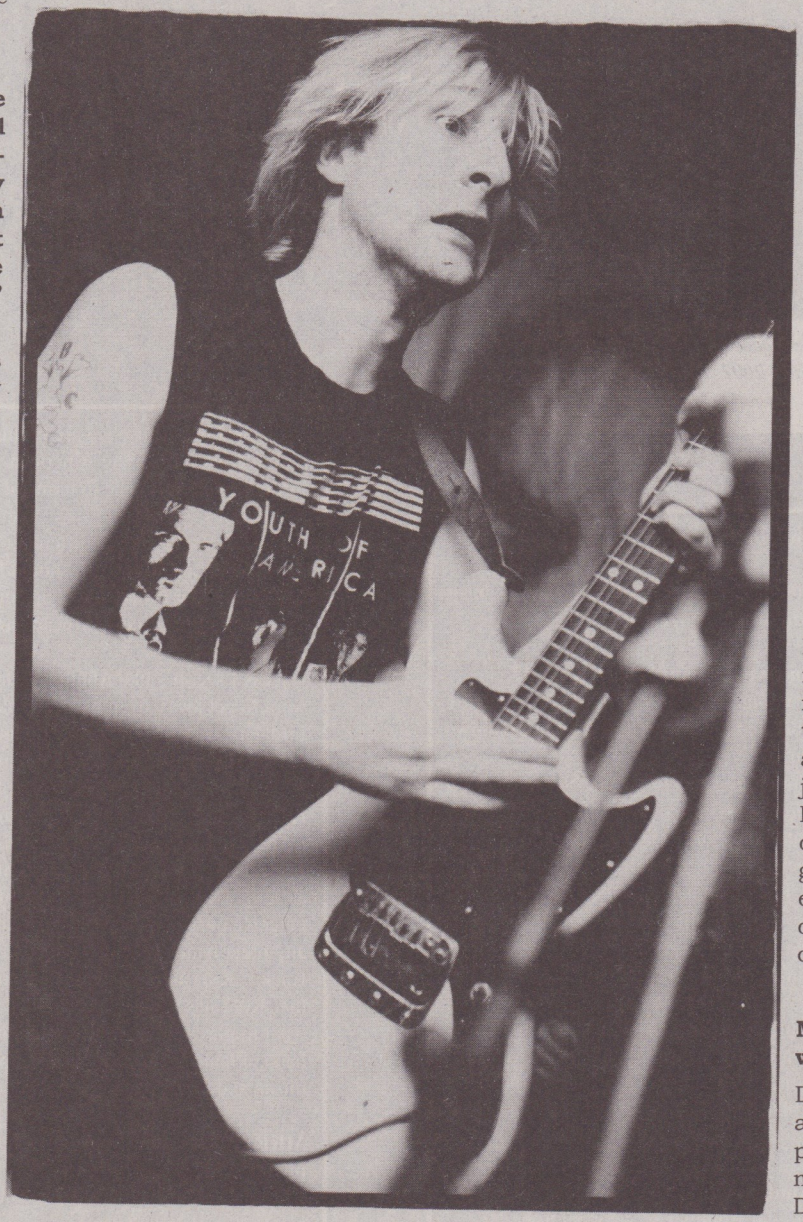
MRR: Earlier you spoke about your vision of Red Dons as a band where members come and go as they feel. Justin now lives in Europe. How does this affect the immediate future of the band? What are Red Dons' plans for 2008?

Douglas: It doesn't affect us dramatically because we knew that was going to be the situation very early on in the band. Justin joined the Red Dons because we needed a guitarist and we always wanted to work together on a project. With that said, though, there were never any delusions about his main focus being on the Clorox Girls or his new band, Suspect Parts. Our friend Andy is playing guitar with us now, but that's not a permanent situation either. Andy has a band called No Secrets Between Sailors, which is his primary focus.

That is where the whole collective idea comes into play. As I just stated, Justin wanted to work on a project with us but was unable to completely commit because of his other bands. The same goes for Andy. Hajji's and my idea of opening up the Red Dons to an evolving atmosphere makes it possible to collaborate with other musicians in this same circumstance by giving them a no-strings-attached forum where we can all work together even if it is only for a short time. Everyone is able to put their mark on the band and they are always a part of the group whether or not they are currently playing with us.

For me, artistically, the challenge is to keep the sound of the Red Dons fairly cohesive while highlighting each person's contribution, but so far it has been a cool experiment that has lead to great experiences. It can also be a little frustrating because it seems like we are constantly looking for a new guitarist, but we have a solid unit with Hajji, Richie, and me, and the unorthodox approach allows cool projects to materialize with musicians we admire.

For example, Peter from Gorilla Angreb and I have been talking about doing a project together at some point. The logistics of us being in a band together are nearly impossible due to him living in Denmark and me in Portland. Also, he is focused on other things like a solo album and going to film school. Despite that, we are both fans of each other's music and would like to try to work together on a project, so a Red Dons 7" is the perfect way to actualize that desire to collaborate. We might start working on that project this summer, but there is no real set timetable for when it will happen. Eventually though, it will be recorded and we will tour together on it. Then, that will basically be it, end of project, and we will part ways to go back to working on our other projects. But it's cool because we will have had the opportunity of working together without jeopardizing those primary projects.

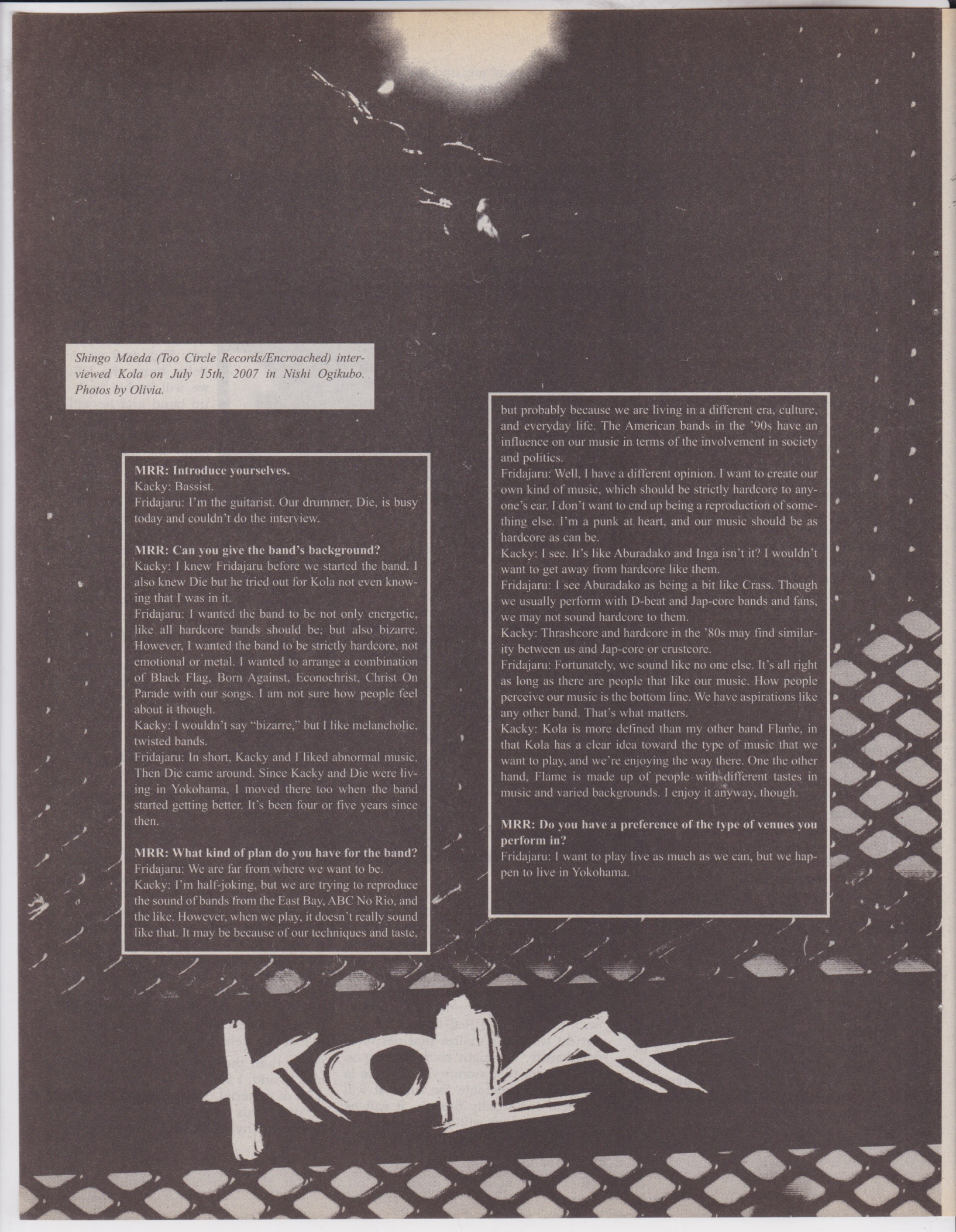


The goal is that everyone helps each other with their respective projects. When the Clorox Girls needed a bassist, Hajji signed up for the job. When we needed guitarists, Justin and Andy have helped out. This year when Peter tours the US, we will be his back-up band and he will be our guitarist. Jonny Cat needed a band for his brainchild, The Chemicals, so we became The Chemicals and he has helped us with recordings and making t-shirts. You see, the collective idea is actually bigger than just the Red Dons. It's kind of like everyone involved with the group and their projects too helping each other in anyway they can.

MRR: Anything you want to add?

Douglas: Well, as far as 2008 goes, we are planning a US summer tour for the Red Dons and Revisions with The Estranged and maybe even Peter too. The Estranged are a cool band from Portland featuring the ex-members of Remains of the Day. Like many of us Portland bands, they are influenced by The Wipers and they have an LP coming out in April on Dirtnap Records. If you can help us book a show in your town, please contact us through our one of our websites.

Other than that I don't have anything else to add. I feel like we have covered a lot of material. Thanks again though for doing this interview, Paco. I hope it answers any questions people have about us.



Shingo Maeda (Too Circle Records/Encroached) interviewed Kola on July 15th, 2007 in Nishi Ogikubo. Photos by Olivia.

MRR: Introduce yourselves.
Kacky: Bassist.
Fridajaru: I'm the guitarist. Our drummer, Die, is busy today and couldn't do the interview.

MRR: Can you give the band's background?
Kacky: I knew Fridajaru before we started the band. I also knew Die but he tried out for Kola not even knowing that I was in it.
Fridajaru: I wanted the band to be not only energetic, like all hardcore bands should be; but also bizarre. However, I wanted the band to be strictly hardcore, not emotional or metal. I wanted to arrange a combination of Black Flag, Born Against, Econochrist, Christ On Parade with our songs. I am not sure how people feel about it though.
Kacky: I wouldn't say "bizarre," but I like melancholic, twisted bands.
Fridajaru: In short, Kacky and I liked abnormal music. Then Die came around. Since Kacky and Die were living in Yokohama, I moved there too when the band started getting better. It's been four or five years since then.

MRR: What kind of plan do you have for the band?
Fridajaru: We are far from where we want to be.
Kacky: I'm half-joking, but we are trying to reproduce the sound of bands from the East Bay, ABC No Rio, and the like. However, when we play, it doesn't really sound like that. It may be because of our techniques and taste, but probably because we are living in a different era, culture, and everyday life. The American bands in the '90s have an influence on our music in terms of the involvement in society and politics.
Fridajaru: Well, I have a different opinion. I want to create our own kind of music, which should be strictly hardcore to anyone's ear. I don't want to end up being a reproduction of something else. I'm a punk at heart, and our music should be as hardcore as can be.
Kacky: I see. It's like Aburadako and Inga isn't it? I wouldn't want to get away from hardcore like them.
Fridajaru: I see Aburadako as being a bit like Crass. Though we usually perform with D-beat and Jap-core bands and fans, we may not sound hardcore to them.
Kacky: Thrashcore and hardcore in the '80s may find similarity between us and Jap-core or crustcore.
Fridajaru: Fortunately, we sound like no one else. It's all right as long as there are people that like our music. How people perceive our music is the bottom line. We have aspirations like any other band. That's what matters.
Kacky: Kola is more defined than my other band Flame, in that Kola has a clear idea toward the type of music that we want to play, and we're enjoying the way there. One the other hand, Flame is made up of people with different tastes in music and varied backgrounds. I enjoy it anyway, though.

MRR: Do you have a preference of the type of venues you perform in?
Fridajaru: I want to play live as much as we can, but we happen to live in Yokohama.

KOLA

MRR: Do you stick to playing in Yokohama?
Fridajaru: I think the hardcore bands in Yokohama are unique, so I always want to invite bands from different places to play our town (instead of playing outside of Yokohama).
Kacky: I like Yokohama because there is more freedom than other places. No upper or lower positions. In Yokohama, people accept bands from other places just like Flame and Kola.
Fridajaru: I don't always intend to stick to Yokohama, but it's a matter of cost. We have more fans out-of-state than here. We may have to perform somewhere else, since the cheapest club that we know went out of business recently.
Kacky: It's like, some of the fans of the bigger bands plus fans from Yokohama and Tokyo come to our gigs. The audience for this type of music is small in Yokohama.
Fridajaru: We are planning gigs in Tokyo this spring. We'll perform live in a studio in Yokohama because it is cheaper.

MRR: Your lyrics are unique. What kind of message are you trying to deliver?
Kacky: I don't want the self-enlightening songs about "my own soul," that you find elsewhere. At the same time, I don't sing about "animal experiments" or "the system" either.
Fridajaru: Well, I don't disagree with songs against animal experiments.
Kacky: I don't think they're wrong, but that that stuff has become too conventional. In other words, it's just another slogan. There's no emotional involvement.
Fridajaru: I think lyrics are like paintings. They give different impressions depending on who is listening.
Kacky: You feel depressed or irritated, thinking of your work and life and stuff. That's when your thoughts go deep and vast, and the lyrics talk about society. My lyrics may sound negative, but I write them to avoid feeling worse about life, if you know what I mean. I write about fear in everyday life where you feel as if you were molded—thoughts of politics and society, including the problem with ideology. I may be criticized for not being punk or for capitulating, because my songs don't really refuse something or protest against something. I have to live my live anyway. I might intentionally add a lot of different meanings and touches to my lyrics, which could affect people differently depending on the situation or mood that they are in at the time—like one day you feel, "I don't wanna be like that," and another day you think, "that's exactly me now!" I want my lyrics to have various interpretations, so that they don't end up only pushing my opinion in the records and live performances. I want them to reflect the emotions of the listeners, or of the crowd at that particular time.

MRR: What concepts were behind the CD released in 2006?
Fridajaru: I wanted to express the feeling of being at a Kola show. We played some of the songs without a break so that they would keep going like at a live performance. Maybe I wanted that energy that the first record should have.

MRR: What does the unique cover art mean?
Fridajaru: I am 39 years old, born in 1968. In my eyes, there are economic problems all over the world now, due to ill politics. That's the image of the cover art.
Kacky: [with a bitter smile] I have a child despite the fact that I moan about society. [His baby started itching from this moment on]
Fridajaru: He plays in a band, even though he's gotta child. Because that's all he has!

MRR: What activities or hobbies do you have other than the band?
Fridajaru: Kola is my priority. I have another band called Caravana Anaquista, but I can't control that band since it changes depending on my mood. I can tell when Kola is good or bad. I like Kola the best. Caravana Anaquista is OK, though. Die also has a thrash-crossover band called Maruball Men.
Kacky: My hobby is raising my child [smiles]. I don't have a real hobby. The band is a hobby in a sense. I am a husband, worker, and a punk rocker, and it could be said that I am doing my hobby the rest of the time. Or maybe that's when I'm doing my real job as a person. I may be happy during those times.
Fridajaru: Well then, I raise a cat and a turtle as my hobby [smiles]. I make figures out of paper clay, and I make stuff from junk. It's art just like music and punk!

MRR: Upcoming plans for Kola?
Kacky: An omnibus record that will be released from Too Circle Records. Hahaha!
Fridajaru: Though we had a lot of gigs in the first half of this year, we have none scheduled now. So I write as many songs as I can to hopefully fill an album. I feel so pumped despite my age. No young guy compares with me!

MRR: Last words?
Fridajaru: I want to keep going without being categorized. People do categorize music saying, "something like Black Flag," for example. I want to do it freely.
Kacky: I want to keep going as long as we can. I know I am the problem in the band, though. However, it's wrong to preserve the band, sacrificing life. I want it like that. Even though people may say that it's a hobby… Well, it ain't a hobby.
Fridajaru: It's no hobby! I used to have money, when I had a job at an electric appliance store. I don't work now. I would have nothing left if I lost my band! I want my band more than my own house, more than money! That's it!
Kacky: Like I have been changed through my experience with other bands, fanzines, labels, and more (planning, distributing, managing to do something, and getting involved in the music scene), I want to be the one to have a good influence on other people. Then, something like that should come back on me.

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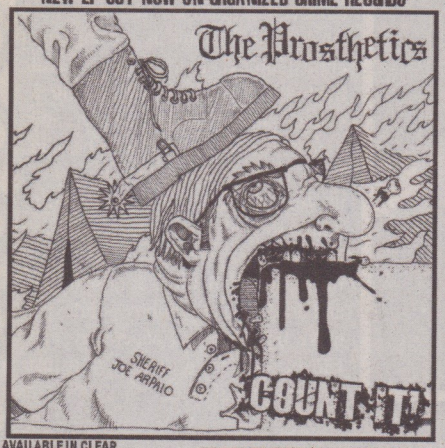

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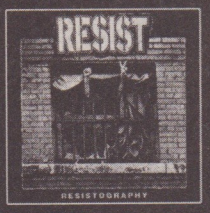

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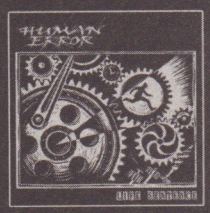

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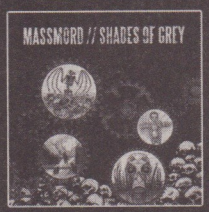

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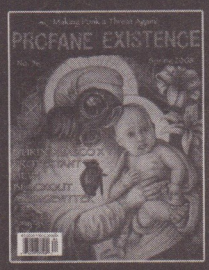

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LOS VIOLADORES

Los Violadores were the most emblematic punk rock band from Argentina in the 1980s. They first came together in Buenos Aires in 1981, and their 1983 self-titled debut LP is considered a complete classic in Latin America. Reunited recently, they're ready to put out a new album. We speak with Piltrafa, the only remaining original member who still leads the band today. Interview by Lucho.

MRR: Tell us a bit about the history of Violadores and punk back then in Argentina.

Piltrafa: Punk in Argentina was born in the late '70s with Los Testiculos. This was the band prior to Violadores; Hari B and Gramatica already played in that band. They went through several vocalists and bass players, and in 1981 Stuka and I joined, eventually changing the name to Violadores later that year. We lived under a dictatorial regime—violent, corrupt, and repressive. The military dictatorship had usurped power from a democratic regime and had brought on what were some of the darkest times in Argentinean history. We wanted to change the name from Los Testiculos, and we liked Violadores (Violators). A lot of people associated the name with the sexual aspect of word "violators"—like "rapists" or something—but we meant it more like "the violators of the law," the military who were violating the Argentinean constitution and violating human rights. We knew that we would attract a lot of attention with that name and with the horrible dictatorship and censorship under which we lived; we definitely knew we would be targeted, and we were. Along with us, there were other great bands in that first wave of Argentinean punk. The most memorable were Alerta Roja, Los Inadaptados, Trixi y Los Maniaticos, and Los Laxantes. Polako used to play in Trixi; he would later join Violadores and play bass with us.

MRR: When did you first meet Hari and the Testiculos?

Piltrafa: I met them first in 1979. They didn't play that often. When we changed the name to Violadores, even though there was censorship, we began to play a lot more.

MRR: What year exactly did Testiculos begin?

Piltrafa: They started in mid-'78 and their first show was in December '78.

MRR: When was the first Violadores show with you as vocalist? What was the line-up then?

Piltrafa: It was in February 1981. The lineup was Hari B on guitar, Stuka on bass, Gramatica on drums, and me on vocals.

MRR: What bands came after that first wave from '78 to '81? Was there a big second wave in '82, '83, and '84?

Piltrafa: There wasn't a big second wave of punk here like there was in Britain. Not too many bands came after that first wave. There was a real good one called Antisocial, I remember, but not that many.

MRR: Any zines from that time?

Piltrafa: I used to do a zine with a friend called *El Desastre*. We reviewed LPs like The Jam and The Clash. We also talked about politics, etc.

MRR: Gramatica use to do one also, right?

Piltrafa: Yeah, he and Hari B did one called *Vaselina*.

MRR: Tell us about those first shows back then.

Piltrafa: It was a very romantic time for us. We did everything ourselves, learning how to do our own flyers and putting them everywhere. Borrowing equipment was always a pain. Our first shows we played to like ten people, then just months later to 200. It was a very innocent time.

MRR: Were there problems with the police at shows?

Piltrafa: There were always problems and many arrests. On July 17 of 1981 we did a show at the University of Belgrano. It was in this upper-middle-class, very conservative neighborhood of Buenos Aires. We were jailed and tortured. I'll never forget it—they gave us false charges and accused us of being Marxists. We were never Marxists; we actually always criticized the Soviet Union for its repressive politics. But we were tortured and jailed anyway by the military police.

MRR: Can you tell us a little bit about the political situation back then, and the effects that censorship had on rock in general?

Piltrafa: There were many rock bands that were silent and refused to criticize the dictatorship. Our resistance was that we wanted to do away with all that bullshit that Argentinean rock represented back then, the apathy and compliance with the government. We had 30,000 people disappear—that alone should tell you about the political situation. Silence was rampant. They continued with their neo-liberal capitalist economic policies. Workers had no rights. Censorship was everywhere, not just in music. It was in the movies, in the press. They controlled every medium of communication. They told the teachers what to

teach at school. It was, in short, like a mini-Germany to us. A lot of Nazis came to exile here after World War II and a lot of their sons and daughters ended up in the military here. There were a lot of people in the dictatorship from Prussian and German descent.

MRR: You guys wrote a song called "Comunique 166" about the Falkland War with Great Britain. Can you tell us what the "Comunique 166" was?

Piltrafa: Well, the dictatorship had all these communiqués they would send to the population. They were all lies, kind of like reports from the war, etc. They did 165 communiqués. There was never a 166th communiqué. They would lie to the public and say that we were winning the war and winning battles, and lie about the casualties, so that's why we wrote this song—to tell our side of the story, to tell the truth about the losing war. It was the communiqué no one had heard, I guess.

MRR: Was there a lot of nationalism at that point? Did the population back the war?

Piltrafa: The whole country had been lied to. There was rampant nationalism and xenophobia everywhere, especially toward the countries around us like Chile, who also were living under a dictatorship. This shows you how much these Nazis wanted power.

MRR: I heard that originally you guys recorded 14 songs for the first LP. What happened to the other two songs that never made the LP?

Piltrafa: "Anny" was one of the songs that was mixed but somehow didn't make the LP. The other one was "Maquinaria," which we never got to mix, and never made it either.

MRR: How did you guys decide to put out the first LP? Did Umbral approach you guys first?

Piltrafa: No one wanted to put out our record. No one wanted anything to do with us. It's not like now where you have several independent labels. There were a couple of labels that actually offered to put out the record but only if we changed the name, etc., but we refused. By 1983 the dictatorship was at its end. We had the album recorded since '82, around the time of the Falkland War. In '83 Umbral finally approached us and asked if they could put the LP out.

MRR: Did you guys have anything recorded before the LP?

Piltrafa: Yeah, we had a four-song demo that today is lost and none of us have a copy. The songs were "Sucio Poder, "Donde Estan las Mujeres," "Patrulla Americana," and "Guerra Total."

MRR: By the time the first LP came out, was it the same line-up or did it change?

Piltrafa: It was the same line-up, but Hari B was on his way out.

MRR: After Hari B left, that was the lineup you guys would keep for awhile, right?

Piltrafa: Yeah, after he left, Polako filled in on bass and Stuka played the guitar. We lasted most of the '80s with that lineup.

MRR: How many copies did Umbral do of the first release? Were there any reissues?

Piltrafa: The first year Umbral sold 3,000 copies of the first record, and in '85 with the success of the second record, Umbral sold 25,000 copies of the first record. As far as reissues, this independent label Tripoli has been releasing it on CD format since '94 and from what I hear it sells very well. The original first pressing of the vinyl LP is a collector's item now.

MRR: I think you told me before that you didn't even get to keep a copy of the first record?

Piltrafa: No, I actually do still have a copy somewhere.

MRR: Do you remember what other bands put out vinyl back then?

Piltrafa: We were the only ones up until I think 1987.

MRR: The Massacre Palestina EP I think came out in '88.

Piltrafa: Yeah, '87 or '88, but before that we were the only ones.

MRR: Do you know there are a couple of bootlegs of the first LP in Europe?

Piltrafa: Yeah, I heard there were some in London and in Madrid and some other places. I also heard there is a British band that recorded "Repression" in English. I am very proud, I guess. I mean, I guess people must really like it.

MRR: At the time did you guys have contact with other bands in Latin America?

Piltrafa: No, but a lot of kids would write us from Peru.

MRR: How did you guys get in contact with R Radical Records for the *P.E.A.C.E.* comp?

Piltrafa: An American kid was traveling in Argentina back then. He bought the record and brought it back to San Francisco. That was the initial contact, and basically after that they contacted us and asked us if they could use our song.

MRR: I

heard Jello Biafra contacted you guys and offered to do something with you.

Piltrafa: Yeah, he used to write to us and we traded records. He liked our first record a lot. I, too, liked *Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables* at the time—it definitely influenced punk a lot. But nothing really came of it, and with time we stopped hearing from him.

MRR: The second album you guys put out was a massive hit, not just with punks but with rock fans in general. The sound was less punk for sure, and it was definitely the beginning of what the band would become later in the '80s. What drove you guys to go in this direction?

Piltrafa: The sound was definitely less raw and it had more of radio-friendly commercial tone. We recorded in a better studio that had 24 tracks instead of eight, and that made us lose some of the energy and rawness we had. We wanted a more rustic sound and some of the members wanted to go into the direction of more of a pop sound. It's a pop punk record but I think it's still good and the lyrics are just as political as the first one.

MRR: What was the kids' reaction when the record came out?

Piltrafa: We lost most of our early audience and gained thousands of others. That record sold more than 60,000 copies in Argentina alone.

MRR: What countries were you guys able to travel to?

Piltrafa: We went to Peru, Uruguay, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Chile.

MRR: In Peru, people still talk about that first time you guys came to Lima and played at Plaza de Acho. What memories do you have from that first time you played Lima?

Piltrafa: The first show in Lima is in my top five shows of all time. We got an amazing reaction from the crowd and we had an incredible time. We still play Lima and have always had good shows there, and I think it has to do a lot with that first time we went in '86.

MRR: I heard you had a band in Peru when you were living there.

Piltrafa: Yeah, it was short-lived. We only played once; everyone was Peruvian except for me. It was fun.

MRR: I know you had a band called Pilsen after Violadores first broke up in the early '90s. Do you have any other projects? Do any of the other original members have some?

Piltrafa: Yeah, Pilsen was fun. We were able to tour Brazil and play and record with Steve Jones of the Sex Pistols and Die Toten Hosen. We also recorded with legendary train robber Ronald Biggs! It was a fun project but I don't do it anymore. As of right now I am just concentrating on the new Violadores album. Stuka and Gramatica both put out solo stuff in the early '90s also.

MRR: At the end of the '80s you guys were more or less the biggest rock band in Argentina. It seems you guys broke up at the height of your popularity.

Piltrafa: Well, I wouldn't say that, but yeah we had stopped doing punk by then and began experimenting with other sounds like big country and celtic music, which I love. We had been doing the band for ten years by then and it was time for a break. No matter how popular we get we will always be the black sheep of Argentinean rock!

MRR: You guys got back together again in the mid '90s also, right?

Piltrafa: Yeah, we got together a couple times in the '90s, first with Polako and without Stuka and then with Stuka and without Polako. We've played off and on since 2000, and just recently got back together again.

MRR: What's the line-up now?

Piltrafa: It's Tucan on guitar (he used to play in Pilsen with me and I think a lot of people like that fact), El Nino on bass (he's been with Violadores since 2000), Sergio Vall on drums (he's been playing with us since '89), and me—the only original member left.

MRR: How do you see the current punk scene in Argentina now?

Piltrafa: There are a million bands but very few interest me. None of them are original. I like Bombarderos—I think it's probably the best one right now—but most of the bands have very poor ideas. I hate most bands, and don't really listen to most of that shit.

MRR: What's coming up for Violadores this year?

Piltrafa: We're releasing two DVDs this year, one from a live show and the other one is going to be a documentary about the band. We're also working on a new record that should be out in early 2009.

MRR: Okay, Pil, one last question: I remember when I was young hearing a live recording of a song called "Nada Mas" by you guys, but I could never find it on any of your CD or vinyl releases. Was that song ever recorded? It's by far my favorite song from you guys!

Piltrafa: Oh, yeah "Nada Mas Solo Punk Rock." We called it "El Himno Punk"! That was our anthem and one of our first songs. It was recorded and put on an EP in '83, the first Argentinean flexi. It was only a promo single for radios, etc. It was later bootlegged on CD with other unreleased songs from a live recording in '81. We stopped playing that song years ago.

MRR: Thanks for the interview, Pil. How can people get a hold of you guys? Any last words?

Piltrafa: We plan to visit the US sometime. We're waiting to get approved for artist visas. I want to say cheers to all the intelligent Americans who are open-minded and read *Maximum Rocknroll*. You can visit our official website since 2000, www.violadores.com. *Salud!*

STRAIGHTJACKET NATION

Interview By Tim Scott

MRR: Where/when was Straightjacket Nation born? Listening to your music it becomes quite obvious that your mother was smoking a lot of meth during her pregnancy.

Emily: The band started in early 2004 as a project between me and Dave (guitarist) jamming in the warehouse we lived in called the Pink Palace. In our spare time between our other bands we listened to hardcore music, spread lies about the band to hype it up, wrote songs, and tried to think of people to get to play. We sent tapes of our songs to Dan (as he lived interstate); he wrote lyrics and we eventually found Al at a show fucked up on spray paint, pulled the plastic bag off his head, and asked him if he'd like to go to America in May/June 2008 to play bass in a band called Straightjacket Nation.

MRR: What kind of lies were you spreading? Were they about your musical prowess?

Daniel: We lied about everything. We tried to present the band as a bunch of glue-huffing 16-year-olds hipped onto Chaos UK records and Japanese hardcore, using pseudonyms stolen from Australian gangsters and corrupt police. Australia has a pretty interesting gangland history because police corruption is so taken for granted here. This band was intended as a deception.

MRR: What were the early days like? Did you have a mindset from the beginning as to what kind of music you wanted to play or did it develop over time/shows/practices?

Daniel: Those laconic early days were spent choking riffs out of the blank-labelled pressings of Fix, Necros, and Antidote records, powered by the swigging of litres of cheap cola, living together in share houses, and squeezing band practice in between call-center work and other bullshit. Over time we developed a work ethic that became integral to how we approached the band. No love for any cunt that wasted time or acted like a slob. We all realized we had less time to fuck around with the band, so we didn't fuck around. The songs got tighter as we worked harder and had to squeeze band practices around our other commitments: tours, work, school, writing, boxing.

MRR: You worked at a call center and boxed? What came first?

Daniel: Call center. Boxing came after seeing Emily fight at an amateur night. She was robbed.

Alistair-William: A call center is funding this upcoming US Tour. Have you had a colonoscopy in the last twelve months?

MRR: Straightjacket Nation has had a lot (some would say everything) to do with the rising success of Eddy Current Suppression Ring. You released the split, but I believe your first introduction to them was a more acrimonious affair, which included phrases like "beat-down" and "pass me the steering wheel lock." Care to explain?

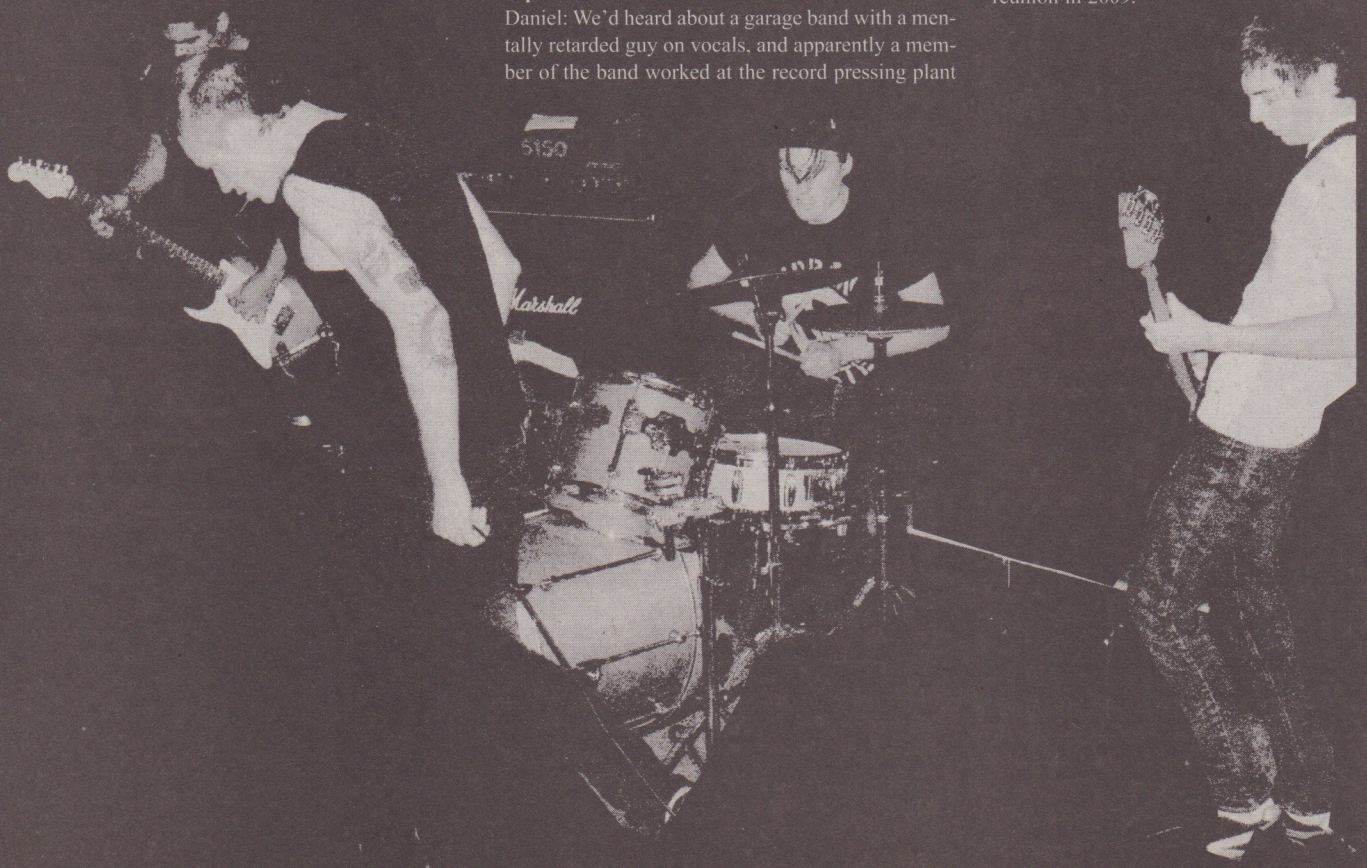
Daniel: We'd heard about a garage band with a mentally retarded guy on vocals, and apparently a member of the band worked at the record pressing plant that we believed had ripped us off. We went to the show to shake the guy down, and also because we are, like most people, curious about mental retardation and garage rock. It made a good story so we inflated it over time to include knuckle-dusters and death threats, but really we were just going to harass him and check out his band so we could make fun of them.

Emily: Eddy Current Suppression Ring has played heaps of shows and gotten popular from their own hard work and good music. They would no doubt be where they are today if we had never played together. For the record, the night we met I was never gunna beat anyone up but I was into seeing something happen.

MRR: For your side of the split, you chose to cover "I'm Stranded." How do you feel that a lot of people's introduction to Straightjacket Nation is hearing you belt out *the* greatest Aussie punk rock single of all time? That riff in the opening 20 seconds is unbeatable!

Dave: It was never meant to be an introduction to Straightjacket Nation. We were to press around 100-150 and sell them only at shows. Dollar signs got the better of us and the fact we had a bunch of covers left over so we pressed up a shitload more.

Daniel: I feel great. Time will prove who is the better band: apparently Keupper was so rapt about our attempt at "Stranded" that he's trying to convince the others to cover "Terror Alert" at their next reunion in 2009.



MRR: OK, so it wasn't an intended introduction to the band but the split was your first vinyl release right? Since then you have released more vinyl and put out the CD comp. At what point did you start to get more interest from overseas?
Dave: Nah, the 8-song 7" was the first vinyl we released, straight after the demo and maybe one other tape. This was the record that the pressing plant fucked us over with and why we met Eddy Current Suppression Ring in the first place. I don't think we have got that much interest from overseas? Most has come from our friends but I guess when we released the 6-song 7" we were happy enough with it to send it to a bunch of distros and got some interest, only just enough to hopefully pull off a tour.
Alistair-William: We got more interest from overseas when Emily, Dave, and Dan all travelled overseas and spread the good word of the nation in other geographical regions. Also, the international punk scene is generally open-minded to transatlantic communication and the rest of the band is very much involved in this community.

MRR: I'm not saying that it's going to happen—but how do you think you would react to or handle a sudden burst of attention or publicity in the same way that has happened to bands like, Fucked Up (who have in some ways helped generate it themselves) or Sex/Vid (who haven't)?
Alistair-William: I saw that footage of Fucked Up on MTV. It was sick. Ridiculous, but sick. I reckon it is rad when really underground cultural stuff like punk and hardcore gets exposed in mainstream media. It's always done over-the-top but it's really cool. Watch GG Allin on *Jerry Springer*. Watch Johnny Rotten on *Judge Judy*. Watch Corey Worthington on *A Current Affair*.
Daniel: Break up.
Emily: We would have more appeal, which would give us more weight to determine the direction of modern hardcore punk. Once we have that, then we will release our upcoming hard rock record titled *Power It Up*.

MRR: Do you see a resurgence or interest in older Aussie hardcore and punk? The *Not So Lucky Country* comp is the main starting point for older Oz HC but what other bands do you think are overlooked?
Dave: A lot of the old Aussie hardcore is right where it should be—in dollar bins—but some exceptions are the likes of Civil Dissident (discography out soon!), Death Sentence, early Vicious Circle, and End Result, but you all know that already! I suggest the *Eat Your Head* 2xLP, all Melbourne but a good comp for sure.
Daniel: I don't like old Australian hardcore for the most part. I think the Chosen Few and X wrote some of best punk tunes by anyone, but a lot of this music is overrated

by spendthrift record collectors looking for the last scraps of punk rock authenticity to repair the psychological damage caused by the end of the Cold War. While I am yet to procure a copy, I think the Upsets' *Back To Afghanistan* single is an incredible piece of Australian punk history. The starting point for anyone interested in Australian punk should be X's *Aspirations* LP, the *Murder Punk* compilations, the first Birdman album, and the first two Saints albums.
MRR: Your songs in large part are a reaction against the uniformity of thought and approach and even image in modern hardcore and punk. The past is often romanticized and hardcore is no different. Do you think it was better or more interesting back then or was it just more squats and shittier drugs?
Daniel: We don't romanticize the past. The fliers and artwork were better for the most part. But there are plenty of bands playing music today that is interesting and complicated and full of the friction and velocity of hardcore from 1981.

MRR: Do many old-timers come to your shows or is it still "for the kids, by the kids"?
Daniel: We are not kids and we were never playing for "kids." Save that for the pederasts and the Peter Pan syndromes. There is no 7 Seconds or BYO element to what we do. The people who come to watch us are usually the fucked-up teenagers, the freaks, and the weirdos, and we like it complicated and nervy. Those looking for cookie-cutter politics, SSD-style unity raps, and feel-good bullshit usually stay away from us.
Dave: We get the odd burnout fuck that comes up and is all like "man, I haven't seen a hardcore band like that in years" or some boring shit like that…

MRR: You have released your fair share of cassettes. Besides the obvious cost benefits, what is the appeal in tapes?
Daniel: They are an almost obsolete medium without mystic functionality, and their sound quality tends to obscure sheen in production. They are the perfect medium for listening to raw, loud music in between home and work.
Emily: Tapes are fucking sick, plus I don't have a discman or iPod or whatever so that's how I listen to music outside the house. The format is awesome—it's cheap and easy and cool to make mix tapes. For the band, the artwork looks cool and they're the only other option if you can't afford vinyl and don't wanna do CDs.

MRR: From the Pagans to One Life Crew, Cleveland has always produced bands not afraid to get in people's faces. Indeed, the more interesting bands in the last couple of years—Fucked Up/Sex Vid/Clockcleaner/Homostupids—know how to fuck shit up. Besides the free whale hot dogs you give away at shows, how do you guys go about "pushing the envelope," for lack of a better phrase?

Daniel: We've got no interest in being considered "edgy" and hip by people who read Peter Sotos and masturbate to accident scenes. I don't want to give people the impression we're "out to cause a scene" or "out to change the world" or even "out to push the envelope." We try to play hardcore music that is interesting and complicated but not full of intellectual pretence or even worse, retard pretence. This extends back to your question about the "kids." I'd like to think in 2008 it's possible for bands to play music that isn't specifically catered to adolescent concerns, like trying to impress the people around you or being bummed because your mother won't lend you 20 bucks or give you a hand job. Our music is written and performed almost entirely without concern of how the audience feels about it. I wouldn't say this makes us an introspective band, but more that we don't consider typical codifiers like crowd participation or the breakdown in barrier between band and audience as a high priority. These are worn-out topics that I don't visit either in my lyrics or when we play live. Please ask this question a different way, I feel like we're coming at it from different angles and it kinda cuts to the core of what makes this band important. I don't want to talk about Cleveland in an interview about Straightjacket Nation.

MRR: When I say "push the envelope," I don't mean being "edgy" for the sake of being cool and different; how do you differentiate yourselves from the legion of other hardcore bands? What is *cult* hardcore? Has it got to do more than just old-school band shirts and spitting bile?

Daniel: Honestly, I think it's hard to articulate something that we're not consciously attempting. Or maybe it's just something that I'd like to not think we're doing consciously. The word DIY doesn't mean anything to me. It suggests a certain naïve ideology and political economy that I'm not comfortable with. I like Poison Idea. Cult hardcore was just a term I came up with in reaction to this, and I like the idea of religious fanaticism/extremism. I'd suggest cult hardcore bands have little interest in "mosh," shirts, shoe collecting, simple politics, sing-alongs and concepts like "old school" or "cult hardcore."

MRR: What is it about religious fanaticism that you find interesting? Is it the fanaticism itself or more the concepts of faith that people become so fanatical about? Is it the scintillating design features on the "God Hates Fags" placards?

Daniel: I think everyone finds fanaticism and extremism interesting. It is foolish but courageous to believe in anything, and people who are willing to put their lives on the line for their stake on truth are always going to prevail.

MRR: Many bands that play this type of music get to the point where they find themselves biting their own tails. The good ones pack it in before they get to that stage. How many records do you have left?

Daniel: This band has taken almost four years to get to the point where we can write songs as strong as we do right now. We have six good records left.

Dave: *Six!* Fuck man, that's pushing it. I feel like we can pull off another 7", maybe something else, but then it is hardcore fuckin' death.

Emily: I'm with Dave. I think we'll release this LP, then probably another 7" and then hardcore death, hard rock birth.

MRR: For a modern-day zine, *Distort* has been pretty prolific and regular. In the current "blogosphere" climate do you think that a lot of quality zines suffer from a lack of regular issues? It seems that people hedge their bets or sit on words when it comes to putting them in print. Unfortunately the same can't be said about people championing the latest Arcade Fire record on their wordpress blog.

Daniel: If anything, the blog has staunched the flow of diary-entry-styled personal zines and messageboards have kind of mopped up the rest of the self-important useless political opinion rags, and this is a good thing. They slaughtered or relocated Amazonian tribes to print people's stance on contraceptive products or how they felt about their ex-girlfriend's vagina, and this is a damn tragedy. In the past couple of years, *HeartattaCk* finally uttered its last breath, *MRR* has really stepped up, and some great new zines have popped up. The zine I am most impressed with at the moment is *Z-Gun*. High-quality reading. So, if the blog is responsible for all this…

MRR: You have all done or are currently doing, zines, labels, distros, and show/tour promotion. Sitting on the other side of being in a band—what is the most frustrating or difficult thing you find when dealing with punk rock bands?

Dave: Bands that want everything done for them. People are becoming so fucking lazy towards doing bands, it is refreshing to see bands coming

along wanting to work hard, put their own records out, book tours, and all that shit. Doing it for themselves.

MRR: More true DIY international bands are now touring Australia. Is it because there is more of an interest in hardcore or is it just easier now for promoters to book and tour bands?
Emily: People in Australia are no more interested in international hardcore and punk as they were a few years ago. The recent heightened interest seems to be coming more from overseas probably because more people have heard about Australia being an OK place to go. Also, obviously the internet has made the process of touring easier and the international punk scene a lot smaller in terms of finding out about bands and places, etc.

MRR: What sites/forums do you recommend for people who want to check out more about what is going on in the Australian scene?
Alistair-William: www.myspace.com

MRR: You are playing at this year's Chaos in Tejas festival. I know Dave played there last year with Pisschrist, but what can be expected from Straightjacket Nation this year?
Dave: Last year was a blast. Expect us to be sunburnt and full as fuck with tacos trying not to vomit as we churn through it trying not to pass out.
Daniel: Spreading diseases with the facially tattooed sect.
Dave: Bridge-jumping nonsense.
Emily: Expect me to be sucking back a bottle of Emergency Essence before I play for fear of fucking up and getting the evil eye from Papa Straightjacket. I'll also definitely be sunburnt and doing my best to get some high scores on American pinball machines.
Alistair-William: Sunburn, cocaine.

MRR: Because of Australia's isolation, it seems that there is always a bit of a big deal when an overseas band tours. Did you experience being "the Australian band" with Pisschrist, and do you expect that with your upcoming tour or do you think US audiences are more accustomed to international bands coming through town?
Dave: Yeah, of course that is true here, but we get like three touring bands a year! The States are crawling with bands from everywhere. I don't feel like it is any different with us; maybe some people will be keen to check us because of our "exotic location," but more likely they want to talk about Rupture or see if we have any News 7"s in our back pockets!

MRR: What are the best/worst things about being in a punk rock band in Australia in 2008?
Dave: The isolation does have its upside with a pretty strong support for local bands playing here. But yeah, for the most part it is outrageous how much money we are spending on flights to the US and Europe for tours. There is no way we are going to make our money back so the best way to look at it is as a holiday for us and have some fucking fun. Also, with the recent jump in postage prices, it is becoming harder to trade records. We are sending records to distros for cost price and paying the postage to make it affordable for the average US record-buying scumbag.
Daniel: The best bands here work hard at what they do. I respect that. Thank you for doing this interview. Please email us at straightjacketnation@gmail.com and check out culthardcore.org.

2008 U.S. TOUR DATES:

May:	June:
Fri 9: Los Angeles	Sun 1: Milwaukee
Sat 10: Los Angeles	Mon 2: Minneapolis
Mon 12: Phoenix	Tues 3: Indiana
Wed 14: Dallas	Wed 4: Pittsburgh
Thurs 15: *Chaos in Tejas*	Thurs 5: Baltimore
Fri 16: *Chaos in Tejas*	Fri 6: Philadelphia
Sat 17: *Chaos in Tejas*	Sat 7: New York City
Sun 18: Houston	Thurs 12: Seattle
Mon 19: Baton Rouge	Fri 13: Olympia
Tues 20: Athens	Sat 14: Portland
Wed 21: Asheville	Thurs 19: Oakland
Thur 22: Richmond	Fri 20: San Jose
Fri 23: Philadelphia	Sat 21: San Francisco
Sat 24: New York City	Sun 22: San Francisco
Sun 25: New Jersey	Tues 24: Bakersfield
Tues 27: Providence	Wed 25: Tijuana
Wed 28: Albany	Thurs 26: San Diego
Thurs 29:Buffalo	Fri 27: Los Angeles
Fri 30: Cleveland	Sat 28: Los Angeles
Sat 31: Chicago	

HUM-005

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two songs from each band,
split release with
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it's brutal, man!

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three epic jams
more heaviness
'nuff said

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19th	BATON ROUGE, LA			15th	MINNEAPOLIS, MN
20th	HOUSTON, TX	1st	RENO, NV	16th	MILWAUKEE, WI
21st	AUSTIN, TX	3rd	SACRAMENTO, CA	17th	CHICAGO, IL
22nd	EL PASO, TX	4th	CHICO, CA	18th	CINCINNATI, OH
23rd	ALBUQUERQUE, NM	5th	MEDFORD, OR	19th	HUNTINGTON, WV
24th	FLAGSTAFF, AZ	6th	EUGENE/SALEM, OR	20th	PITTSBURGH, PA
25th	LAS VEGAS, NV	7th	PORTLAND, OR	22nd	PHILADELPHIA, PA
26th	SAN DIEGO, CA	8th	SEATTLE, WA	23rd	BROOKLYN, NY
27th	LOS ANGELES, CA	9th	SPOKANE, WA	24th	WASHINGTON, DC
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		11th	SALT LAKE CITY, UT	28th	ASHEVILLE, NC

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THE SEARS

FREEDOM FROM WHAT

THE STORY OF SEARS
BY LANCE HAHN

"If I had to do it again, I would and not change a thing!" says Dave from the Sears. The Walsall-based quartet, featuring Dave on guitar along with Nick, a.k.a. Stinkas, on bass, Corny on vocals and a revolving door of drummers, bashed out a unique blend of melodic punk that fused elements of other female-fronted groups like Action Pact or the A-Heads with '80s hardcore.

Founding members Dave and Nick "Stinkas" had come to punk rock separately.

Dave: "I got into punk rock at school, really—y'know, all your mates were into it. I was always into guitar bands pretty early on, like T. Rex, but always thought they looked a bit silly in their frilly gear, to be honest."

Nick: "I got into punk after I saw The Pistols on TV being ultra obnoxious on the Bill Grundy show. Also, seeing all the stuff that was happening with all the other bands being formed, and the whole "newness" of punk. I really liked the idea of the old music scene being given a good kick up the arse. I was only 13 at the time, so it felt really new and vibrant."

Wanting to play music wound up being equal parts desire and convenience.

Dave: "I had a friend called Alleric who was in a band and he used to leave all his guitars at my house 'cause his house was miles from their rehearsal rooms. So, I used to practice at home with his gear. Then I had a few friends who were like-minded and it all kinda stemmed from there."

Nick: "I wanted to get into a band after going to see other bands and loving every minute of it. The noise, bustle, and loads of different people coming to gigs from all over the country had a big effect on me, and I really wanted to be a part of it with my own band."

The group organically developed out of the members' social circle.

Dave: "We all knew each other from school. Nick was the one who basically got us all together though. I guess that was around late '78, but the band got together about late '79, early '80, if I remember right. It's been a while."

Nick: "All the members of the Sears knew each other from school, and all lived locally, as the year that we started was the year after we had all left school. The singer was from about 15 miles away, and I had met her at a gig. The time the Sears started was January 1981."

As influenced by the times, even the early Sears were aware of Crass and the anarcho scene.

Dave: "We were all into that stuff anyway. But I was more into Discharge. I liked the guitar tone. Once again, that was more Nick and Corny who were more into that stuff than me."

Nick: "The first time that I heard about Crass was when their first album was reviewed in a paper called *Sounds*. I remember the reviewer really slagging them off for their lyrics and sound, but there was something about the picture that was used in the review that got me thinking. Their first album really had an influence on me, and I remember 'dossing' the streets with my mates, singing the lyrics."

Their influence from and involvement with the anarcho scene was as personal and wrapped in nostalgia as it was ideological.

Nick: "The anarcho days were—don't want sound like an old fart, but—they were the best days of my musical life. Of course, looking back, we were young and trying to change the world, but I still hold a lot of the ideals that I had then today."

Soon, the band was gigging somewhat regularly. For some punk groups, 1981 was a fertile time for playing live, depending a lot on geography and timing.

Dave: "We did a lot of local gigs with local bands. Nothing too spectacular, really, we even used to play in Nick's house at parties when his parents were out! I can't remember the first "proper" gig, to be honest, although I do remember doing gigs with Conflict and Discharge at the Cedar Club in Birmingham along with GBH and the Dead Wretched, Drongos For Europe, and Birmingham bands like that."

Nick: "The first gig that we ever played was at a local youth club, with the smallest amount of equipment ever seen, after being dropped off by my dad in a really small car that he had at the time. None of the band could drive, as we were too young.

No one played with us, but quite a few people turned up by "word of mouth." It was a mad experience for the people running the youth club, and as you could expect, we weren't asked back. The gig only made us want to play more. The next gig was at a pub in Birmingham, playing with a local band called C.I.D. All I can remember about the gig was being ripped off by a second singer that we had recruited, and the C.I.D. singer screaming 'We're fucking great!' when they were far from great. Still, the gig made us want more!"

While influenced by the anarcho scene, actual involvement was limited due to their location in Walsall and the focus of most activities in London.

Dave: "Nick and Corny were more involved with that than I was. I agreed with it all, but they seemed to have more of a voice than me, if you get what I mean."

Nick: "I wasn't that involved with much "direct action" to try to change things, but I did go on a couple of 'Stop The City' marches, in London and Leeds. We did play gigs as benefits for animal rights, the miners' strike, and anarchy centers. Every other gig was a benefit for someone or another, and looking back, it was only our hard work and believing in what we were doing that kept us going. I don't want to sound like an arse, but now that I am older, the money from gigs never seemed to go to the groups. We did it for the love, but were the last to take anything out. Wouldn't change a thing though."

With the band tightening up quickly, the next step was to start recording. Back then, the easiest way for a new group to get the word out was via demo and practice tapes. With the demo-trading and tape-selling scene affecting all levels of anarcho punk, it was an easy way for a band to get heard in areas to which they had yet to travel. But the Sears were never interested in making their tapes available to the public. For them, the tapes were documents of their own progress and a way to self-analyze. Especially on their later demos, the band showed off both their ability to play cohesively together as well as their knack for dynamics and melody. Even with the most rudimentary practice room recordings, the strength of the group was evident.

Nick: "We had recorded about four demos. I have them on tape somewhere. This was the first time that we had done anything to release."

The tapes, even the most poorly recorded, are even today totally dynamic and exciting. The fast pace of many of the songs mixed with a singer that could equally sing tunefully or shout uncontrollably made for a potent combination. Some great tracks like "Heroin Horror," "Bowie's Famous Now," and "Boredom" were documented in these sessions. But even with these great recordings, the band was mostly known by their live shows.

Dave: "I think we did a few shows with the Subhumans, and Nick once again had more to do with that than anyone else. If I remember right we were going to release a single on Mortarhate first but that fell through. Then the Bluurg thing happened."

Nick: "We ended up on Bluurg after playing with the Subhumans a few times. We got to know Dick, and he asked us to do an album."

With several years of vinyl and cassette releases under their belt, Bluurg was a consistently successful label and a great home for a band that might appeal to the Subhumans' audience.

Dave: "I was about 18 at the time so it was all new to me. I didn't know what the hell was going on. I remember having a fun time though, for the most part, except when someone (no names) erased half of the tapes and we had to do a couple of songs again. I remember we did it in a week, recording and mixing. Looking back now and with the job I do now, I'm kinda like 'Ouch, that's outta tune, ouch that's outta time, ha ha.' But, you know, it was a great experience and I wouldn't have changed a thing."

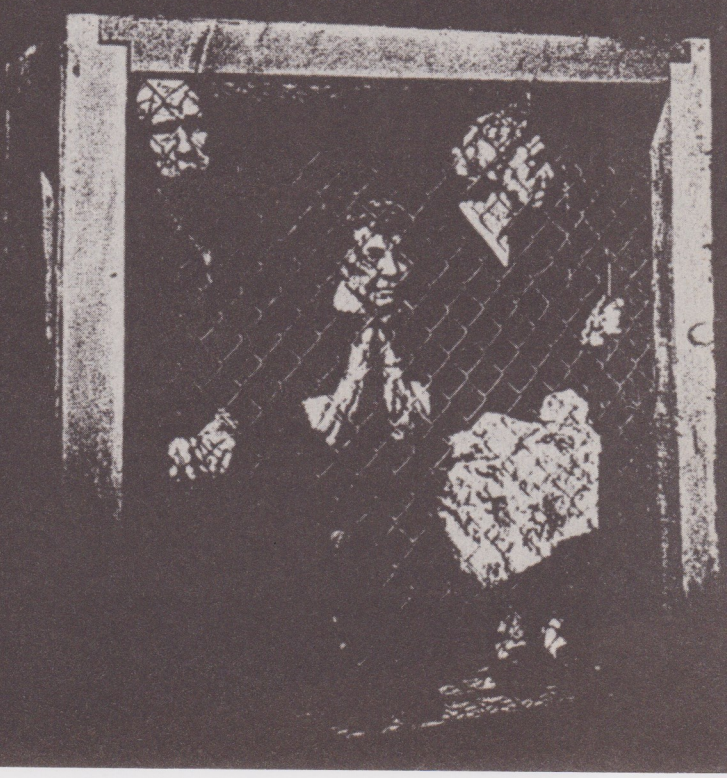
Nick: "Totally amazing doing the record. We stopped in London for a week, and saw how, as we saw it, 'the proper bands did it.' We recorded it at Southern Studios, with Jon Loder, who was connected to Crass, putting up the finances. Crass popped into the studio a couple of times and it was great to experience the whole thing."

The resulting 12" titled *If Only…* was a powerful seven-song debut. With a mixture of fast and faster punk and a live guitar tone, the record seemed more like a quick sampler than a complete picture of the band.

Dave: "I was happy with it then, kind of, but it all seemed to happen in a flash. We were very young, y'know. I think we did a couple of pressings, maybe more, of 2000 each, and they sold I believe. People who had it liked it, I guess. I've seen a couple of them on eBay over the past few years though! I've had a couple of bands I've worked for tell me they used to come see us play. That's kinda weird."

Starting with a proto-gothic drone covered in mystically wailing vocals, the band lunges into "Not Prepared." The song is a template for the group's propensity to alternate between fast and brutal with creeping and creepy. The standout for many was a thrasher called "System Psycho."

Nick: "I remember listening to the album in the recording studio at the end of a hard week and thinking that it was a load of trash! Couldn't believe that it had turned out so crap. It was too rushed, and needed two weeks, not one week to do it properly. Everything, from the sound to the artwork, was rushed, and we were really disappointed. To this day I can't really play the album, due to the mistakes. Dave the guitarist has tried to re-record the album, but it was never finished, due to his commitments."



Like with the A-Heads and Faction, Bluurg had found another great female-fronted group that in their own way foreshadowed the arrival of bands like Dan and Joyce McKinney Experience. While the combination of Bluurg's limited promotion and the group's own limited appeal, the record was still a successful release in terms of underground releases.

Nick: "The public response was OK, as we sold about 2,500 copies. Not in the big league, but good enough for us."

The record concluded with "Statistical Rape," the content clearly previewed in the title, but also introduced with a sampled dialogue about rape. The power of the theme and the band's response to it made for an uncomfortably strong end to the record.

Nick: "We were compelled to deal with feminist issues as the singer wrote 90% of the lyrics. Totally agreed with the views though, as I did with the lyrics for other songs. Wouldn't have wanted to be involved with a song if I didn't agree with what it was trying to get across."

In fact, by the mid-'80s the punk scene was at least able to give lip service to feminism and women as a legitimate and unique rebellious voice. Early punk bands, from the Slits on down, who shirked the stereotypical vision of women in groups helped open the forum for bands like the Sears to make their statements in a friendlier environment.

Nick: "The only gig where we had any hassle with having a girl singer was when we played at Sunderland and there were a load of skinheads shouting "get your tits out." It never got any worse though. Most people were totally cool with us and treated us as friends."

The band's fame was stunted largely by their limited promotion. At a time when a band was best promoted through live performances, the Sears only managed one full tour.

Dave: "Not as much as I would have liked to, but we did a few tours. One that stands out was with a Norwegian band called Bannlyst. They were great and their drummer was a nutter. He loved to drink Scrumpy cider and run across the roofs of cars. Very amusing, we thought."

Nick: "We only really toured once, with Bannlyst. Most of the gigs consisted of one to three off at a time. We managed to do around 100 gigs in the four years that we were together. Always seemed to be teaching a new drummer how to play the songs, and not getting a consistent tour going."

With no plans of future tours or further recordings, the singer split within a year of the record's release. With her gone, the band decided to call it a day.

Dave: "All I know is that the singer wanted a job! I guess she was over earning no money. I think in all the years we did the band, we earned about thirty quid total, ha ha, so she left and that was that."

Nick: "The band decided to split, as the singer had had enough, and we couldn't really replace her. We were totally pissed off with teaching new drummers as to have to get a new singer. I was well fed up, and it took me a long time to get over the band splitting. The bands that I was in later in life never meant the same to me. I would have walked to the gigs that the Sears played, as it was a way of life to me."

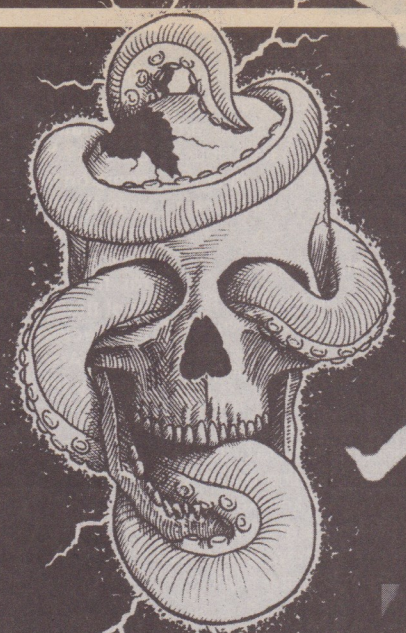
For a variety of reasons, none of the band members ever did much performing again.

Dave: "Nick, the bass player, owns a company. Corny works for a local government music scheme for underprivileged kids, I think. But I ain't that sure. Ian Bates, the drummer, died from a form of leukemia. He was 21. Quite sad, when now at 40 you look back on it. And I'm a sound engineer for touring rock and metal bands. Whatever."

Nick: "I have been in two bands since The Sears. The first was a rhythm and blues band that got me playing again, but it wasn't really in my blood. The second, believe it or not, was a Sex Pistols tribute band. Don't fall about laughing. I did it just to get me playing again, but as you can imagine, it was slightly embarrassing. Nice to play again though."

Possibly just a footnote in their lives, the Sears were, if nothing else, an expression both made and felt by many.

Nick: "As I have said, I still believe in a lot of the ideas from that time, but it has had to fit in with my life today. I have a wife, four grown-up kids, a mortgage, car loans, and my own business. I suppose that I have got a lot of things that the anarcho ideal life would not agree with, but my kids have grown up as great human beings who care about other people and other things, and I treat every person that I meet with respect. However, if that respect is not reciprocated then the respect is lost. This applies to people/organizations in power or the average person I meet. So since the Sears have broken up I have still challenged various issues I have seen as being wrong. This has led to taking part in organized marches and campaigns as well as challenging teachers and corporate organizations. My children have always been aware of my beliefs and I have openly discussed issues with them. I feel this has made them more rounded young people. We are told by their school that they discuss their views in lessons and are aware of what is happening in the world."



TENTACLES OF DESTRUCTION

Tentacles of Destruction are from Auckland, New Zealand. I don't know who to compare them to, but live they cover the Partisans, Agent Orange (US), and JFA. That should give you an idea of where they're coming from. In December 2007, they played a few gigs in California and France, but this interview was done prior to that. All I want to say is—in a scene saturated with business-oriented mentalities, contracts, guarantees, and hype, these guys are a true breath of fresh air, all about having fun, being punks, and not *being fuckin' rock stars. Their first 7" should be out on New Zealand label Rock Fort Records by the time you read this.*

Interview by Alex Simon.

MRR: Can you start by telling us how and when you first discovered punk-rock? What was the first band that made you think, "Fuck, I want to be a punk"?

Josh: I saw that Sex Pistols film *The Filth and The Fury* and I was kinda' interested in it. So I started listening to some of my dad's old punk records—he used to be into it—such as the Ramones, Stiff Little Fingers, Cockney Rejects, Ruts. But the band that really changed me was Dead Kennedys. Hearing "California Uber Alles" for the first time definitely made me go: "That's it…I'm definitely getting into punk." It changed me from that point on.

James: When I was about 12, my old man bought me Nirvana *Nevermind* for Christmas, and I must have listened to it a million times. It's not necessarily *punk* in the traditional sense of the term, but it definitely led on into punk for me; it's just three guys playing angry, creative music, and I've always been interested in the more creative aspects of punk.

Sam: I got into punk through a number of things: Beastie Boys' hardcore stuff, my brother's interest in the Clash, people at school. Minor Threat and Bad Brains were probably the bands that got me the most excited about this sort of shit back then.

MRR: Is Tentacles O.D. your first band? When did it start?

James: Me and this guy Daniel used to just jam on guitar and bass for hours at his place calling ourselves Tentacles of Destruction; we were 14 or so. We wrote some pretty weird songs. Eventually we got Josh, like a couple of years later. Before I was in Tentacles, I was in a punk band called Duffysome, real NoFX-style shit, they were voted "worst band of the year" on some internet forum.

Josh: Tentacles is pretty much my first real band. I used to jam with some dudes at school but they were into rock and metal. It was cool jamming though. I heard about James from someone, contacted him, and that week we jammed and have not stopped.

Sam: I played in this other punk band and got to know James and Josh through them. We were real shit.

MRR: There are not many bands playing the style of punk you guys play in New Zealand, right? How did you get into all these old US bands—Black Flag, Circle Jerks, and shit? How do you usually discover foreign bands? By reading zines? On the internet? Through mixtapes?

Josh: I originally listened to lots of British punk 'coz that's what my dad had. I'd heard of Black Flag, Bad Brains, etc., but when I met James he got me into them. And when I heard JFA from Sam, that really got me more and more into that style; it just sort of happened as we all really started listening to that stuff the same time Sam joined the band.

James: We never really intended to be old school hardcore-ish shit, but I love that stuff. A friend of mine lent me Black Flag's *First Four Years*. I used to listen to it on the train on my way to school; I used to listen to the same CD everyday for about six months. I find out about new bands from friends, usually Josh, he finds out from the internet. And yeah, we're pretty much the only New Zealand old-school hardcore-ish band — I'd say.

Sam: It's just the type of punk I've always been into; music from that era in the US is just fuckin' good. I find out about foreign bands in a totally by-chance kind of way, just anywhere.

MRR: New Zealand's a pretty isolated country—how do you think that affects you, both as a band and as individuals?

James: I love New Zealand, I think when we play overseas it will be insane though; I can't wait. I went to Hollywood last year and the difference in punk is crazy. In New Zealand, it's not really accessible because it's so small, so the people that are into it are a bit more genuine, I think. In the States, you can walk into a shop and walk out five minutes later looking like the fuckin' Casualties--it kind of defeats the purpose.

Josh: I find it hard to say as I've never really been anywhere else other then Australia. In terms of as a band, it's harder to get noticed internationally—not that that's a huge goal of ours—but, ask someone into punk if they know any New Zealand bands, probably not. I think it's definitely harder to get big here.

Sam: Yeah, I wouldn't really notice the isolation all that much because it's all I've really known, but I do know that New Zealand's isolation has nurtured styles and aspects in its music that are kind of unique. I'd hope that we bear a little of that but I'm not sure; on the other hand, this country doesn't feel that disconnected from the rest of the world, especially as far as shitty pop culture goes. I myself don't feel that disconnected in that sense either, not as long as I can sit down and watch some MTV/Hollywood/Fox Network bullshit whenever I want.

MRR: Tell us about Auckland—what's going on there? What are the cool local bands and zines at the moment? What are the good spots to play gigs for DIY punk bands?

Josh: Good bands: Wrongmen, who are also going to Europe later this year, play a heavy sort of hardcore-metal-hybrid according to Sam. Sort of Converge meets Black Flag...*sort of.* Smashin Off is thrashy hardcore—real cool, not generic thrashy hardcore though. Streetkunt is D-beat, sounds like Skitsystem. Missing Teeth is a band we all love; just cool-as-fuck punk, fast, awesome, and forever good. Possibly going to Europe later this year also. Good venues? It's all been house parties recently as there are no all-ages venues other than bars. House shows are awesome 'cuz it's free and all-ages, no bouncers, etc. And these shows are fuckin' awesome.

MRR: Craziest gig you ever played?

Josh: My favorite was a show above a sex store in someone's house where we played in one corner and across the other side there were some stairs and people were jumping off them. There was a rope hanging from the roof for some reason and people were swinging off that and everyone was just going fuckin' crazy. It was just so much fun, Sam was standing on top of his amp, and James kept getting knocked over, which knocked over all my drums and cymbals, but we still kept playing somehow. We kept playing more and more songs into the night.

James: Last Punkfest was pretty fuckin' sweet. Punkfest is a New Zealand festival in Wellington where bands and people from all 'round New Zealand come together and it's basically the funnest shit out. We were playing and there were a million people on the stage singing along to our songs, I couldn't see Sam or Josh, there were just too many people in the way—definitely my favorite show ever.

Sam: Even though I wasn't in the band at the time, I'd say Tentacles' first show in Palmerston North was the craziest. They played so loud that they broke a microphone, and James played guitar with his teeth. I'll never forget it.

MRR: I heard Josh broke his arm skateboarding but kept playing drums anyway, is that true? How exactly did you break your arm?

Josh: Nah, I broke it when Limp Wrist came over. I did a mean-ass jump off the stage during Wrongmen's set and landed on my arms awkwardly. I didn't know it was broken; it just fuckin' hurt. I wasn't going to miss Limp Wrist so I stayed and had heaps of fun still jumping off the stage, etc. It was really fuckin' painful. I went to bed that night but the next morning I went to the doctor and he told me I had to go to hospital. I had an operation and now have two pins in my arm. I got off work for about three months—all paid for. And yeah, we still jammed and played a show with my broken arm in a cast. Oh, and I can never fully straighten my arm again, it's permanently bent—doesn't stop me playing, though.

James: Permanent *limp wrist*—yeah, Josh's mum was at that gig, he went over and hugged her after it happened and had a bit of a cry. The gig we played when he was in his cast, Sam pulled out of, so we got our old bassist Daniel to fill in. We hadn't played with him in about a year; we had a 20-minute jam and played the gig, it was cool.

MRR: So you're coming to Europe in December, right? Do you have any expectations about it? What are your plans in Europe? You told me you were just going to come on holidays and then maybe play a few gigs if you have the chance, which is pretty rare to hear since most bands come on tour here so they can get money at gigs and travel for free or cheap... I thought it was really cool that you don't give a shit and just want to check out the cool shit and skateboard spots. Are you aware that winter in France is a shitty time to go skateboarding?

James: I cant wait, I'm real excited, I'm expecting to see heaps of berets, pointy mustaches, and goatees, maybe some striped shirts and heaps of artists painting sexy ladies whilst drinking wine. I'm expecting it to be pretty freezing, otherwise; I don't really know what to expect. Really, we just want to come over and have a good time, we're going to San Francisco first, which will be mean; I just took out a student loan saying I'm going to buy a laptop or some shit for university and instead buying a ticket to go be a rockstar for a few weeks. I just hope everyone's friendly over there and we get to play a few gigs, and heaps of people just have a party.

MRR: Three favorite New Zealand bands of all time?

Josh: Poisoners is fuckin' awesome ska meets punk, but not generic. Even if you're a ska hater, don't write them off—they're awesome as fuck. Missing Teeth has always been a favorite. They were the first live band I ever saw and are still cool. Third band is between Wrongmen and Shortlived—two amazing live bands at the moment.

James: Missing Teeth...made me look at New Zealand punk in a whole new way. They are brilliant. Mistaken Identity is an old-school Oi band from Hamilton; genuine as fuck. The Bludgers, another Oi band from Hamilton, and features some of the same members as Mistaken Identity.

Sam: Missing Teeth, the Wrongmen, Evil Priest.

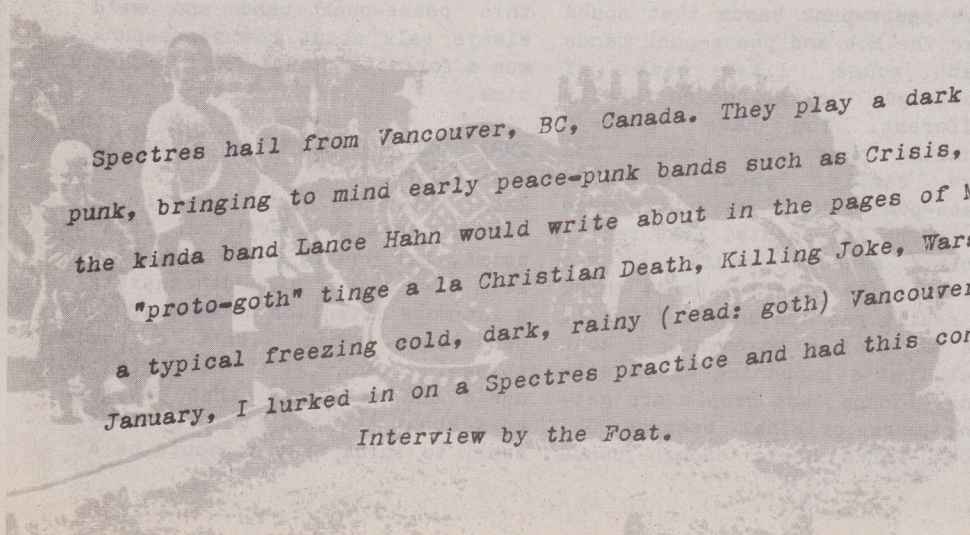
MRR: Future plans?

James: Go to more countries, release more stuff, and have heaps of fun.

MRR: What about the Rainbow Warrior?

James: *Femme la bouche.*

SPECTRES



Spectres hail from Vancouver, BC, Canada. They play a dark style of punk, bringing to mind early peace-punk bands such as Crisis, The Mob, or the kinda band Lance Hahn would write about in the pages of MRR, with a "proto-goth" tinge a la Christian Death, Killing Joke, Warsaw, etc. On a typical freezing cold, dark, rainy (read: goth) Vancouver evening in January, I lurked in on a Spectres practice and had this conversation...

Interview by the Foat.

MRR: All right, so, what are your names and instruments, and bullshit like that?
Steve G: I'm Steve, I'm the drummer.
Nathan: I'm Nathan, I'm the bass player.
Zach: I'm Zach, I play guitar.
Brian: I'm Brian, I sing.
Steve H: I'm Steve, I play guitar.
Zach: I also wear a vest, it's my other instrument.

MRR: In most of your reviews and what people say about you, you're described as a peace-punk band with, uh... proto-goth overtones, if you will. In fact, the song "Cold War" has an almost direct Crisis riff in it. Do you feel this accurately describes your sound? What would you say your influences are?
Brian: It's actually a Soviet war riff... [laughter] I guess me and Steve started the band to sound like a peace-punk band-we were listening to a lot of Crisis and early punk stuff at that time. We just wanted to be a darker band. We didn't really want it to be political, even though a lot of the lyrics have those overtones in them. It wasn't really intentional, it was just supposed to be a snapshot of the time that all of that was going on, I guess.
Zach: I think when things first started off, there was a lot more of directly talking about specific bands, and as time has gone on we've moved in our own direction. Away from straight-up emulating certain sounds.
Nathan: I think that's really a fair way to describe that record for sure-it does sound like that-but I think a lot of the stuff we are doing now doesn't really sound like that at all... well, some of it does, but some of it sounds completely different.

MRR: I've noticed more of a Killing Joke, Joy Division kind of sound.
Zach: Yeah, for sure.

MRR: For the live set anyway.
Brian: Yeah, fair enough.
Zach: And basically when we write songs, we sort of write them in a group, so it seems like every time we write, we'll write like three songs more or less at once and then end up taking on a different sound each time. That's just how it is, I guess.
Steve G: That's definitely where it started out, that was the idea, and things just sort of go from there.
Zach: They kind of snowball.

MRR: It seems like peace-punk, or at least the traditional peace-punk sound, has kind of been forgotten about over the years, but recently I've noticed more bands have been coming out with that sound; do you feel like this might be a new trend coming up, and if so, how do you feel about that?
Brian: Well, I don't really think there is a peace-punk "sound"-I think peace-punk was reactionary to a lot of stereotypical '77-sounding bands. That's why you have peace-punk bands that sound like The Mob and peace-punk bands that sound like Lack of Knowledge. They all sound totally different. You have "goth-y" sounding peace-punk bands, you have really "punk" sounding peace-punk bands, or you can even go to The Astronauts, like really "folky" sounding stuff. It was all over the place; I don't think it really was a sound, I think it was more of a movement. I hope that that's happening again with punk. I hope that people are getting more original because God knows we've heard enough bands with "Dis" in the first letters of their name. It's boring. I mean, I love Discharge and I love a lot of D-beat bands, but it's kind of redundant and it's been a mainstay for a long time... I really don't think it's working any more, I don't think people are into going to see ten bands that all sound the same.
Steve G: That said, that's a fair question about the movement thing-those things scare the shit out of me...well, they don't scare me, but they definitely put me off. Any time anything becomes a movement, for me it becomes dis-interesting...uh...less interesting.

MRR: "Dis-" interesting?
All: [laughter]
Steve G: Hey, it's a fucking word! [more laughter]
Nathan: That's your new band, isn't it?
Brian: It's actually our side project.
Zach: It's sort of funny though, because this band started quite a long time ago, before even I was in the band, or Nathan was in the band, or Steve G was in the band, it was just Brian and Steve. At that time I remember Brian telling me he was going to start this peace-punk band and we'd always talk about how peace-punk was a forgotten sound for all that time.

MRR: And you want to bring it back...
Zach: [laughs] Well, yeah! It seemed totally novel at that point, but you're right, it does seem like all of a sudden there's a lot more attention being paid to peace-punk. Which isn't a bad thing-I mean, it's all great music and it's good that people know about it, but it is kind of scary to think that it could be a

SPECTRES

trend or something like that.
Steve G: It just makes it more ephemeral than a band that stands alone. Once anything comes in… I don't know, it just tends to whitewash the rest of it.

MRR: It seems a little less genuine.
Nathan: Yeah.
Zach: Yeah, for sure.

MRR: The town of Vancouver seems like it's saturated in hipsterdom-beards, white belts, and "arty" punk with no sense of sincerity seems to be the main scene. Other than that, there's a few crust and power-violence kind of bands, garage rock and straightedge youth crew; in this city at least, it seems like you guys stand alone. Do you feel like you belong to a certain scene?
Steve H: I would definitely say no.
Nathan: No, I don't think we are part of any kind of scene here at all. All those different groups of people you might have just described… I mean, we're sitting here and we don't ever play any shows because we're not any part of that-not to say that it's good or bad…
Zach: For better or worse!
Nathan: We're not part of any of it, not even close.
Steve H: I would say it's something a lot of bands run into, where they are kind of a unique band for their area so they end up having more of a following in other cities. In our case, it would be Portland, and Seattle to a lesser extent; our label's out of Portland and it seems like people are always asking us to come and play everywhere except Vancouver. It's kind of a unique scene in its own way, Vancouver… I don't think any of us are expecting to fully fit in, but it works out well.
Steve G: That can only be a good thing for sound, and we have enough friends that we can play shows with and I think it's a good thing to not sound the same as all the other bands.
Zach: Yeah, maybe there isn't a peace-punk or post-punk scene happening in Vancouver, but that's not a bad thing. I think we've been really well received by all sorts of different people that we've played with, and so far it's just been tons of fun. It's cool when you play a bill that has a bunch of bands that have nothing to do with each other-it's an interesting show to go and see.

MRR: Yeah, that was going to be my next question; do you feel accepted in the scenes that you play in? You've played with metal bands like Limb from Limb and crust bands like Massgrave.
Steve G: You dick! [laughter]

MRR: Hey, I had to throw that in there.
Zach: Shameless plug!

MRR: Kind of more popular, hip bands like White Lung or Nu Sensae.
Steve G: Don't give them the credit! [laughter]
Nathan: Take it from what I said to answer the last question, it is absolutely every show we've played with all these different bands-they are always super fun and we've always been received really well, so it's a good thing.
Brian: I think it's good that there's a lot of different things going on… That's kind of back to the whole peace-punk thing we were talking about earlier-with those bands, you'd see Antisect and Lack of Knowledge on the same bill. It's good; no one wants to go to a show hoping that all the bands are going to sound the same. At least I don't. I love lots of bands that are not the same scene as mine, and lots of my friends are in bands that don't sound at all like mine that I also love. It's more of an interesting situation when you've got a diverse bill.
Zach: We've had a good time playing with all the bands that we've played with, and most of the shows we have played have been with metal bands or crust bands or more straight-up kind of punk bands or sort of "arty" punk bands or whatever, but it's been good for the most part, we haven't had much to complain about… People have a pretty open mind these days.
Steve G: The odd fight aside.
Zach: When Brian and Steve behave themselves, things go well.

MRR: It seems like Portland especially has quite a following for you. I was just wondering how you got hooked up with Whisper in Darkness label?
Brian: When me and Steve first recorded our demos, we didn't even think it would ever be a band, we just wanted something to do because we were both living in this tiny community on Vancouver island that we both grew up in. We just recorded this demo for fun, and one day I just decided to send it to Frank because I read his zines before and had met

him at a couple of shows. I knew he was interested in that type of music but he didn't really have anything on his label except for Unit, which is an entirely different story, but he liked it and said he'd press it so it worked out.

MRR: You mentioned you are from a small town on the island, Coombs, BC, and it was just Brian and Steve H at first. What made you decide to start a full band and start playing live shows?

Brian: Well, I'd lived in Vancouver before that and it was kind of just inevitable-we just thought that if there was interest, and we didn't think there would be any at all, that we would try to start it as an actual band.

Steve H: I moved over to Vancouver and we'd been in a few bands together before that and a lot of things just sort of fell into place in a really interesting way where people started coming into the picture who were interested in playing this music that they'd never heard before and things just kind of snowballed into having a full band and writing new songs and playing shows fairly quickly.

Zach: It's only really been a year and a half that this has been a cohesive band; before that, it was just a project that you guys worked on, so things have moved really quickly.

MRR: Peace-punk has a history of being overtly political, sometimes over-the-top "anarcho," aesthetically and lyrically-do you feel like you fit in to this stereotype at all?

Brian: I think that at one time I did, but I'm not as outspoken politically now as I once was... I still have personal politics that lean towards what might be considered anarchism, but I don't think it's as overt as it once was-personally, anyways.

MRR: It seems as though your lyrics are somewhat political but not in the usual anarcho-punk way, so to speak. You don't have stenciled lyrics about destroying the government or banners behind you in your live show stating your political beliefs...

Zach: They're written on his backpack in whiteout.

MRR: It seems like you're playing on how hopeless things are. You have lyrics like "revolution, no solution," and you have lyrics calling out college activist types saying things like "it's easy to believe it's right, when you're young, rich, and white," do you consider yourselves a political band or anarcho-band in any kind of way?

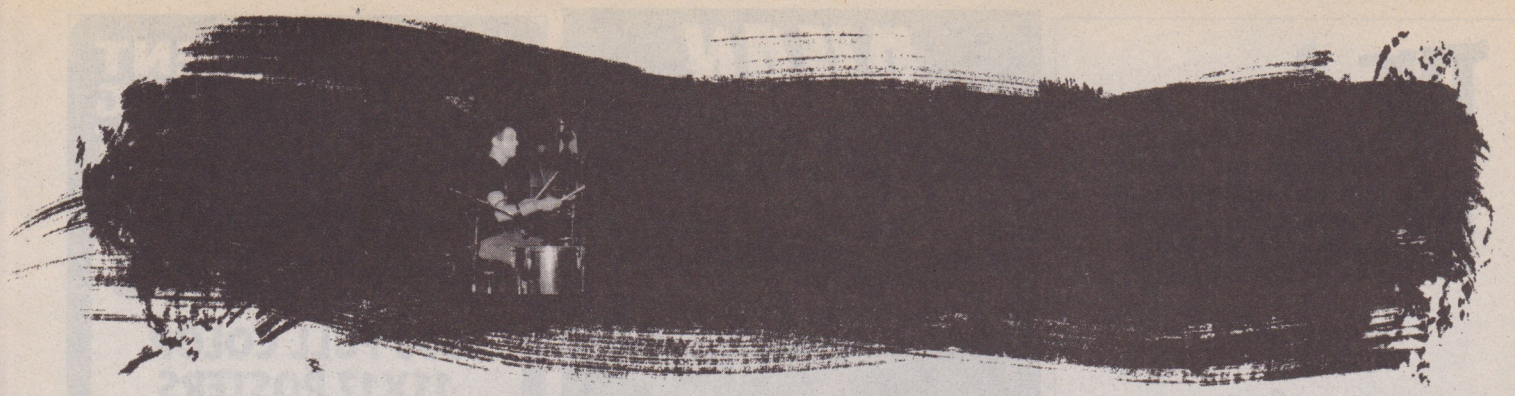
Brian: I think what you said right there is exactly what the lyrics were originally written for-that's the kind of goth element to the band. Obviously, the Cold War was ridiculous and Hiroshima and Nagasaki were atrocities, but there's a horror associated with that that not a lot of people necessarily considered. They think about the war aspect of it, and you can fly your CND banners, but that's all irrelevant now. The horror of those things is forever. You can see the shadows of children burned into the pavement, and as far as I'm concerned that's a lot more goth then talking about bats and spiders.

Steve H: I also think that we've never really had any lyrics that I would consider preachy. They're a lot more about statements and observations rather than trying to coerce somebody into going and doing something. It's a little more hopeless in that respect, but I think that we've all listened to enough music over the years that has been incredibly preachy, where it gets to the point that it's way too much... That's not what we're about at all.

Zach: I don't know, I just think that a lot of it, like you say, the lyrics are political but in a reflective way I guess. We've got a new 7" coming out called *Visions of a New World*, and the title track has always been one of my favorite of our songs; there's this one lyric that says "I have only one thing I can offer, and that's a vision of new world." I think that ultimately we're a band, we're not a revolutionary army, and we write songs that people can listen to, and that's what you are offering up, it's a vision of a new world.

MRR: Saying that, do you think bands of your style, or punk bands in general, should be obligated to play music with political messages?

Nathan: I don't think anybody should be obligated to do anything! [laughs] Insofar as I can understand what Brian's lyrics are about when I actually read them, they're never like "do this, believe this, think that"-they are simply observational. It's almost like storytelling or picture painting, and they happen to be stories and pictures of terrible things, and you can take whatever you want from that. You can be like, "maybe we should do



something about this, maybe I don't care, maybe I think it's funny…" I see it as observational snippets.
Brian: I'd like to go back to the lyrics about revolution. I actually wrote that when Zach and I were going to university, and there's a never-ending army of college activist kids there that are all just trust-fund kids, and not that there's anything wrong with that, it's probably a good thing, but when people are shoving their personal politics down your throat it just makes you resent them.

MRR: You have some West Coast dates coming up with the Estranged from Portland, am I correct on that?
Zach: That is correct, we're going on tour from April 17-27. Basically, just down the coast. Ten days with the Estranged-it'll be quite a trip. We'll be supporting our new 7".
Steve G: Providing we can get across the boarder.

MRR: You have the *Cold War* EP, and I guess this new one coming out-what other projects have you guys got planned?
Zach: We were just discussing that.
Steve H: We've got a 7-song full-length that we'll be recording in June or July called *Last Days of the West*. Mainly newer songs, "Revolution" is on there, but we're planning on it being a lot different than the last two in a few ways. Obviously, the newer songs sound different than the older ones, but I'd say it sounds more like the first record then the second one, but the production will be a lot more involved and intense. There's going to be a lot more samples and it'll be a lot different than what's being put out at this time, at least in this genre.
Zach: Like I said earlier, we tend to write songs in blocks, and we wrote these songs about a year ago over a period of about a month. It's definitely a different sound, not really a turn in a different direction…
Brian: I think it sounds like the first 7".
Nathan: It's definitely a block of songs that work together. We are constantly way ahead at writing new songs and coming up with new shit. The stuff that we are going to record is old to us now, we wrote it a year ago and we've got a ton of new stuff that who knows when we'll get around to recording it.

MRR: And the LP will be released on Whisper in Darkness then?
Brian: If they'll have us…
Zach: Frank, if you're reading this…
Brian: We've also been talking about doing a split with The Now Dead from Seattle, but we don't know what's happening there.
Zach: As soon as those guys get out of jail we'll do a split with them.

MRR: That's one of the guys from Sanctum? Kind of a goth-y kind of band?
Brian: Yeah, Jeremy from Sanctum, it's kind of Christian Death kind of thing.

MRR: Are there any current bands that influence you or that you think people should check out?
Steve H: Frustration-a lot of people compare us to them.

MRR: Limb from Limb?
All: [laughter]
Steve H: The Now Dead, as mentioned before. The Estranged, Deathcharge…
Brian: I like the Hunt a lot. They're from New York.
Zach: I'm a big fan of Complications.
Brian: Me too.
Zach: There's millions of bands, this is just limited to our genre but we all try and stay up on our punk contemporaries. Everybody except Steve.
Steve G: Music is none of my business. (laughter)

MRR: Anything else? Last words, words of wisdom?
Zach: Come see us on tour, buy all of our records and t-shirts.
Brian: Don't support us monetarily in any way.

MRR: Actually, that reminds me. It seemed like there was an inter-band kafuffle about whether or not to have t-shirts… if I remember correctly Brain didn't want t-shirts?
Brian: That's very true, I was opposed to t-shirts and any sort of internet presence, just because I thought that it was counter-productive and I didn't want any band that I was associated with to be that type of band, for lack of a better way to put it.
Steve G: How do you feel about that now? [laughter]
Nathan: Then we explained to him that when you're on the road if you sell a few t-shirts you might just get to have breakfast in the morning [more laughing] and he kind of came around.
Brian: It makes sense. I guess the college anarchist in me just needed one last boot from Nathan's logic.
Steve G: So now we've got bumper stickers, key chains…
Zach: Bottle-openers, beer cozies…
Steve G: Go check it out.

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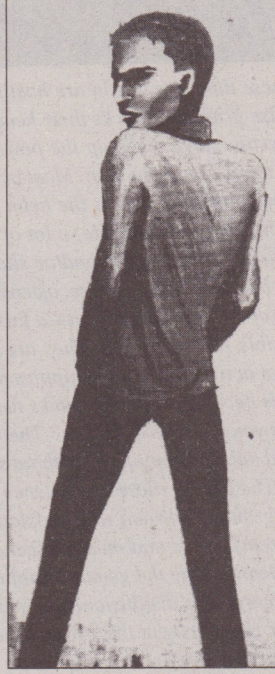

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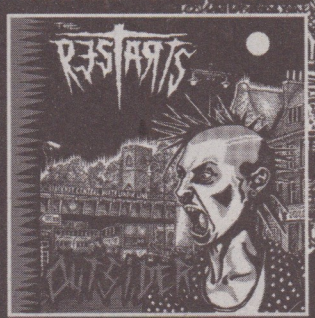

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UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND

These times we live in are hostile and complicated. A war rages, a lot of dudes trying to kill each other while everyone else grumbles, ducks their heads, and tries to avoid the crossfire. For people who like their music to be aggressive, to question, and shake up the power structure (as punk, particularly the kind of punk MRR *likes to cover, often does), these times are kinda lean. Most of the people currently listening to thrash, grindcore, hardcore, metal, angry punk, etc. are probably doing so at the helm of a tank while they keep an eye out for IEDs on the side of some artillery-scarred Iraqi highway. Meanwhile, a lot of people back here at home are dressing up like dumb hippies, listening to innocuous acoustic "psych" music and/or slavish Grateful Dead rip-offs, doing mushrooms cut with whatever, and then pretending to be innocent and naïve, ostensibly so they can block out the ugliness of the world. All cheap euphoria with no recognition of the world around it—a false narcotic of escapism like the* American Idols *and Jet Skis at which these "hippies" ostensibly roll their eyes. They are acting a lot like the hippies 40 years ago, and the punks tend to hate them just like the real activists hated the hippies in the '60s. Also just like the '60s, a lot of the punks are listening to some of the same records because, well, the punks need to unwind sometimes with some euphoria, too.*

But you know what is nice? There are some bands and records out there that can have a soothing quality, that euphoria and balm of happiness, without sacrificing some awareness of reality and the essential elements that make them, well, punk. The best of these in existence right now is The Underground Railroad to Candyland, no goddamn doubt about it. Underground Railroad to Candyland has a rich history of deviant behavior, ideas, and music stretching through their old (great) bands and musical scene up to the present. In this, they are much like Devo, who were a punk band mistakenly identified by the general public as a new wave band, and started confusing audiences in the very early '70s after they emerged as disillusioned ex-activists fresh from the Kent State shootings, and continued to do so well into the peak of their popularity in the 1980s. Underground Railroad to Candyland is made up of smart guys who revel in this confusion, just like Devo.

Central Underground Railroad to Candyland mastermind (and Recess Records "mogul") Todd Congelliere has traveled the punk DIY pathways in both the spastic/hyper-catchy teenage punk band FYP and the punk/rock powerhouse Toys That Kill, and, much like Jerry Casale did in the brink-of-nuclear-war early '80s with Devo's unlikely pop masterpiece Freedom Of Choice, *it took Todd well over a decade to come up with an ensemble that produces a perfectly distilled, euphoric blend of the best parts of their past endeavors, replete with a deliciously bitter aftertaste of weirdness that undermines all attempts to classify it as the supposed pop narcotic. Nor do they actually sound anything like Devo. Rather, Underground Railroad to Candyland's music is like the actual experience of drugs themselves, as differentiated from the cheap escapist facsimile of being high provided by true pop music, badly done rip-offs of '60s psychedelic rock, or the various strains of techno shoveled down our throats in car commercials and on dance floors alike. Underground Railroad to Candyland will provide you with that pure euphoria, but like ecstasy and/or a handful of vicodin and adderall, there is a creeping edge that you know is as pure and real as the euphoria itself and that you have to embrace as part of the experience. You have to dance to it, and dance hard, but there is no funk, there is no thrash, there is no unwieldy grafting of disparate styles upon a core substance. No, Underground Railroad to Candyland is* pure *in the most basic definitions of that word—clear and true, absolute; utter, sheer, ceremonially, or ritually clean. They make me glad to be alive.*

Interview by John No, photos by Shanty Cheryl.

MRR: OK, gentlemen... Name, job in the band, favorite San Pedro landmark and band. Jack Doyle, you can substitute San Diego if you want for this part.

Jack Blast: Action chorus. Favorite landmark: my picture I painted on the sewer right by the beach. Also Sunken City and ports of call. Favorite San Pedro band of all time: Black Flag, also FYP and the Leeches. Favorite band right now: anything Jessica Feeney is involved in. I would give you a band name but she's probably changing it as I speak.

Todd C: I play guitar and sing. My favorite Pedro landmark has to be Sunken City, not only 'cos it's sunken but because my more "responsible" friends can be caught down there with a hookah!

Jack Doyle: Bass and back vocal (un poco harmonica)...favorite San Pedro landmark would be the sign that says, "Welcome to San Pedro." The first time I came to Pedro, I was going to a show at 4th Street with San Diego people, and I didn't know where we were going. Seeing the sign brought on an immediate emotional swell because I'd found out about the Minutemen while I was growing up in Nebraska and always fantasized about what type of place Pedro must be, considering it was the physical and cultural surrounding of their legendary sound. It also sort of signified an arrival of sorts in my life because it meant that throughout my travels, aspirations, and bad decisions I was able to randomly visit the SoCal hometown of a band whose music was a symbol of the greatness and inclusiveness I didn't always experience in the music scene over there. Fave Pedro bands: Minutemen, Toys That Kill, Killer Dreamer, Can of Beans, duh.

Jimmy: I am Jimmy Jackets, and I play the drum set. There is this smoke pole that vertically says San Pedro on it sitting right off the 110 Freeway (110 ends in Pedro) When I used to live in LA and first started coming to Pedro in mid-2002, I started noticing it more, and eventually it became a symbol of all the good times I've had there. It's a good pole.

MRR: I'm just gonna jump straight into the music... You guys seem extremely aware of exactly what it is you are doing and how to do it; this seems like a very deliberate band with a specific, focused vision even while retaining a feeling of organized party-band chaos. Would you say that is true? If so, is it a result of a full-band collaborative process? What is your writing process like?

Jack Blast: Misunderstandings from being

really high. Like, did you just say that? No, but those would be good lyrics.

Todd C: I never sensed any sorta focus with this band. We all have ADD! And our personalities show. I pretty much have songs that I made while my cat was being lazy around me and bring them in and everyone's creative input turns 'em into what you hear. If it was with any other people the songs wouldn't have came out that way for sure! It's not so much that we are focused, but more that our personalities shine through assertively. And we are very passive people! Ha!

Jack Doyle: I think the band came from Todd and Jack Blast spending inordinate amounts of time together smoking pot, watching sports, eating candy, and coming up with hilarious ideas that ranged from puppet shows to songs with lyrics like, "Big Marcus, little Marcus, fat Charlie, *regular* Charlie!" Todd is a songwriting machine and at some point he asked me to play harmonica and Jimmy to play drums in a new band and we were down. I remember we had some shows before we practiced and Todd and I talked about ideas through email while I was in France. Once we got together, we had to hustle because we needed to get ready so there wasn't much time for discussion. We pounded out the songs real quick and maybe stopped a few times at most to re-organize or arrange. We are all tight friends who love music and listen to a lot of the same things, so it all came out pretty seamlessly. As far as arranging and adding little things to the songs, we've always been real collaborative. We all like what each other's personality brings to the band, so it was pretty open. Todd, though, as I said before, is the songwriting machine who comes in with the lyrics and basic structure. The songs are easy to rock out and have (mostly) simple structures, but Todd's creativity is really inspirational and anything but run-of-the-mill. If anything, the simple structure allows for the big explosion and layers we look for when we play. That has been even truer as we've had people playing keyboard and extra drums for the past few months.

Jimmy: As a band, we're buddies first. We like each other a good deal and we know each guy is as *goofballish* as the next. Still, we all want to be proud of what we do, so I think that motivates us to get better both as a band and with our respective duties. Don't wanna let the other dudes down, basically. That seeps into the music but it's not where it starts. I have a lot of respect for Todd in general but more specifically with his writing talents. I trust him completely, and like I said earlier, I've been playing drums with him since 2002 when I joined Toys That

Kill and he's really never let me down. Jack Doyle has really proven to be a stand-out bass player. I think him and I are starting to really understand each other—as rhythm buddies, we must! As for Jax, him and Todd have these crazy, chocolate-eating, weed-smoking, game-watching sessions where they work out the vocals. I don't think "Body of the Bird" would have happened if it weren't for those sessions, but I could be wrong.

MRR: The lyrics are often very dark in contrast to your feel-good, "I got what I wanted for my birthday!" hyper-melodic-punk-rock-euphoria-ecstasy party anthems. Why do you think this is? Todd, is it simply a coincidence that your lyrics in this band have gotten increasingly bizarre while the music you play is distilled to its least-melancholy state compared to all your previous (excellent) bands, or is there some logical purity of dual contrast going on here that I don't quite understand? Is it like a punk version of the Brian Wilson "the demonic voices in my head must be silenced by a chorus of pure angels" thing?

Todd C: I will be the first to admit that the lyrics are riding the gibberish line to people who I don't explain them to. "Yuppie Hip Hop Ad" is a result of sitting around and watching TV. I know it's not punk, but it is what it is. "No Way Miss USA" is me being totally disgusted with this world that people would let something like this happen, but I didn't wanna go beyond that. Plus, it would've ruined the song.

Jack Doyle: Todd loves Brian Wilson, and as far as I know, his songwriting seems to be gaining speed!

MRR: What kind of dead bird was it that you found downtown, exactly?

Todd C: There was a rumor, within the band, that it was about a dead hooker that was found in a bush on 4th Street and Pacific. This is just not true!

Jack Blast: The bird was a man. Todd still keeps him in his closet. That fool smells though.

Jack Doyle: Dead bird? We're all alive! And we're going downtown to hang out with you!

MRR: Does it make you feel weird to hear that your band would be really great to take ecstasy to?

Jimmy: That's kind of a bummer, 'cause I think we are more of a mushrooms kinda band, hah. Even though when we try to play on it, we're like scared deer.

Todd C: That's actually a great compliment! Ecstasy makes people tell the truth about how they love things even if they are lying.

Jack Blast: No. Somebody actually asked me if it would be good. I said, why don't you try it. He said he would and get back to me. So I'll keep you updated. Maybe it'll be the new pop rocks and soda.

Jack Doyle: Well, ecstasy supposedly makes you want to party. Partying can be really important if it's connected to productivity. Really, in this day and age, what is more important or revolutionary as a 30-plus-year-old than to have the time and the wherewithal to party? So, no, it doesn't make me feel weird. I've never done ecstasy though.

MRR: Jack Doyle, who is your main inspiration as a bassist? Obviously San Pedro has Watt, but does San Diego have bass legends that you feel deserve their due? Do you think the kids you teach at middle school would like Underground Railroad to Candyland? Do you think your music might get them to try ecstasy?

Jack Doyle: It's weird because although I undoubtedly love bass I've never set on it as my instrument… It's just what I usually play… Does that make sense? My main inspiration to play comes from Todd, Jimmy, Jack, Joel, Baby J, and Chachi. Kids at the school would like the fact that Jimmy is a great drummer and the songs pretty much dance around. You know kids, though—they seem to like shit that seems so far away. Kids will do what they want and ecstasy is likely in the forecast for some of them, along with failure, success, kids, murder, etc.

MRR: Jack Blast, you rock it like a cheerleader in Underground Railroad to Candyland, kind of a mix between Flavor Flav and Beau Beau from Avail, but much taller, and you thoroughly work the audience. Being the classic MC that you are, what is the best reaction you have gotten from a crowd at a show?

Jack Blast: I consider myself more of front action chorus. In a town near Chicago, the crowd lifted me from the ground up. The crowd was floating each other all night long. I think I even saw the bartender floating. That was a fun show. If I see people moving around or dancing or just straight-up feeling it, making bird sounds, or singing along, it makes it all worth it.

MRR: Jimmy, how would you contrast your drumming in

Toys That Kill with Underground Railroad to Candyland? Do you aim for a higher level of dance-ability (obviously *not* bad disco-punk style)? Would you characterize the approach as similar, or would you say it's a different thing entirely?

Jimmy: Obviously the songs Todd brings in are adding to that. He knows my drumming style and what I'm capable or incapable of doing, so he accommodates that pretty well. Also, Doyle's bass playing is different than Chachi's—where Chachi is more groovy and trippy, Doyle is more poppy and melodic. Both are great and I'm pretty lucky to get to play with 'em. I don't know if I try to make it dancier, but sometimes I find myself dancing while playing—hah.

MRR: Is Hamiltron [Fleshies] considered to be a full member at this point, or at least a permanent touring addition? I know I'm biased, but Hamiltron's Fun Corner (featuring floor tom, keyboard, and tambourine) kicked ass on that last tour. How did you guys come up with the Fun Corner, and how did Hammy end up doing what he did in the band?

Jack Doyle: Hammy isn't really permanent because two other people have already replaced him! When I was talking to him about us going to the Bay Area in January, he asked about playing with us again. When I told him that we had replaced him with two people, he told me to make sure to say that he did it first, by himself! And yeah, he totally kicked ass on the tour. One of the great pleasures of my life was spending a month in close quarters with Hammy.

Jimmy: Dude, having Hammy on that tour was great. He's been one of my top three drummers for a long time and to have him playing (I must correct you John) the Fun *Station* alongside me was great. It all kinda happened on accident. I just got this really solid computer job and the tour came up shortly after that. I told the band I couldn't go. So with that, Hamilton was asked to fill in for the tour. Let me just say that at no point was I ever bummed about this. Anyway, as I was going through some life-changing obstacles one day about two months before the tour began, I started asking myself why I was choosing this job over being on tour with my friends and playing with The Arrivals every night. I felt bad for changing my mind at the last minute and leaving Hammy out of the drum spot. But since there were some double drums on "Square Ball" and some keys throughout the record, the idea of Hammy being the "utility guy" was perfect. Thus, the creation of the Fun Station. Since that tour, we have split up the Fun Station duties to Joel Jerome from Hawthorn [and Dios Mal Os] on the keys and Chachi from Toys That Kill playing percussion.

[update: I saw three shows with Joel and Chachi, and they thoroughly brought it all the way. *Totally* awesome, and they are permanent members of the band now. —ed.]

MRR: How do you guys choose your covers? Is the cover medley approach patterned after Weird Al or '80s dance clubs, or something else?

Todd C: Actually this started out as a cover band with a coupla originals. I love '60s music and this was almost an attempt to be a band that was typical before Dylan came along—where you didn't really write your own songs but played everyone else's. I dunno why in the hell I wanted to tap into that?!?! It just sounded fun I guess. Turns out I ended up with a buncha songs on my little recorder that didn't really feel like Toys That Kill songs. The New Order song, "Age of Consent," was one of the first songs that only me and Jimmy practiced. Then Doyle asked if he could jam and we tried "Boris the Spider." The first song on my "list of songs to do in a new band" was "Harry Rag" by The Kinks. We never got to that one. We will, though.

Jack Doyle: The cover medleys came out of music *fanship* and dorks spending time together with loud instruments and weed.

MRR: What are some of your best tour stories? Where have you been, and where do you plan to go?

Todd C: I always forget tour stories 'cos we're drinking the whole time, but we did go to Japan with The Bananas and that

whole thing was a highlight. Our tour with The Arrivals was way good. I can pick any day of any of those tours and there would be some sorta highlight in my life, but I just can't remember.

Jack Blast: Man, there's a couple really good ones. In Olympia, Washington, I got out of a DUI. I had to take a test, and when I passed I got back in the van and everybody had open containers and started clapping. In Brooklyn, somebody took a piss off this four-story apartment building, and four minutes later a guy climbed up the fire escape and said, "Yo! Who pissed on me"? We are going back to Japan 'cause I love it there, even though I don't fit in their buildings. We're also planning a micro tour up north.

Jimmy: One of my favorite memories was in Japan, when we first played in our costumes that we bought at some six-story 100-Yen store (Doyle's Pikachu, Todd's Godzilla, and my soccer field). I remember us running to our instruments and all the Japanese were giggling hysterically, after that it was a total blur. Hearing the Japanese chanting, "*soccer field, soccer field,*" over and over was pretty gratifying. Sillyness. Oh, and once we were doing this all-night drive (which we tend to do too much), and Jax was driving, and at 4:00 or 5:00 in the morning, I remember waking up to him asking the drive-through attendant at McDonalds something like this:

Jax: Ummm... Do you, ummm, have apple pies?

McDonalds dude: No sir. We don't.

Jax: Ummm, OK.

...then he just drove off. Hahahah! Whatta weirdo!

Jack Doyle: We almost got busted for being completely stupid behind a club in Gainesville with you [I have a somewhat fuzzy memory of this —ed.] and several other friends. We'd been parked there for about 14 hours and felt so comfortable that we were blasting music, drinking, and passing weed around. The police came up with the big sweat mobile and were giving us the third degree until some saint (or ghost) threw a rock at one of the cops (right in front of you and I) and their attention was diverted, saving Jack Blast and Todd from having to go to jail. We promptly locked up the van, walked back to the hotel, and found a keg party in the pool area.

MRR: Is it true that in Japan you can get schoolgirls' panties, magic mushrooms, monkey brains, and beer in vending machines over there? Would you say that is a good combination of supplies for an Underground Railroad to Candyland show?

Jimmy: Hah yes! The only thing missing there are burritos.

Jack Blast: I didn't see any of that except for beer in vending machines. Wait, was that Japan or Hammy's place?

Jack Doyle: That seems like a great combination for an Underground Railroad to Candyland show, except that experience has taught us we shouldn't do mushrooms before playing. However, mushrooms are encouraged for the real fans. Japan was a 24-hour adult-sushi-arcade theme park with rock bands and good food.

MRR: The LP sounds great. Where did you record it and how long did it take to finish? Any studio stories? Any more recordings coming up?

Todd C: Joel from Dios recorded us at his Dumb Angel Studio. He plays organ with us now. It was quick, free, and totally the best

experience ever. He has one of those older Tascam reel-to-reel 8-tracks. I think we recorded on 1/4-inch tape. He's got all these good mics and compressors to aid it all, but it was mainly straight to tape. The combination of everything made the recording awesome!

Jack Blast: We recorded in El Segundo. I was giving shout outs to Bill Smith the whole time.

Jack Doyle: As far as I remember: We mostly tracked in one day and then spent the next three nights or so mixing and adding vocals, etc. Todd did a few guitar overdubs and Joel added keyboard. We have a new song that we really, really like and want to record soon.

MRR: What other projects are you guys working on these days, individually and as a group?

Todd C: I've got another band with the Dios called The Bible Children. We don't play much at this point due to everyone schedules but it's fun when we do. Besides that, just a lot of Recess stuff to work on.

Jack Doyle: I play in Can of Beans with Chachi, Baby J, and Joel and I have started a pre-Beck *Odelay* cover band with Joel's brother Keven.

Jimmy: I have an 8-5 job and Underground Railroad to Candyland and Toys That Kill take up the bulk of my time. I'm fairly content with that. If I could not have a full-time job and just play music, I'd have it made, but who wouldn't want that?

Jack Blast: You might not believe this but I'm still working on Full Blast. It's a slow-cook process, kinda like chili.

MRR: Would you guys describe yourselves as "lifers" at this point?

Jimmy: Hell yes! I'm a pretty lucky dude to have these guys to play with. I feel like we are just starting to scratch the surface.

Jack Doyle: Any talk about the rest of my life includes, first and foremost, my wife Vanessa. She's wonderful and in line with the idea that it's really important to continue to have fun through old and new activities and experiences. I'm 31 years old now and can't imagine not continuing to play music and being creative with other people. I've never had more fun in my life than right now.

Todd C: For better or worse, I realized I was a "lifer" a while ago. I'm just glad I'm not a "jobber." I feel good knowing that I have been playing music with little or no financial success for 17-18 years, and it just gets more pleasing everyday. I consider myself lucky and realize that music doesn't owe me anything. I owe it.

Jack Blast: Yeah, I donated my body to art a long time ago.

MRR: Any further comments/final statements?

Jimmy: Thanks John. Can't wait to play with you guys next week. [Yes, it was damn fun. —ed.]

Jack Blast: Do it for yourself. Do something with yourself before life does something with you.

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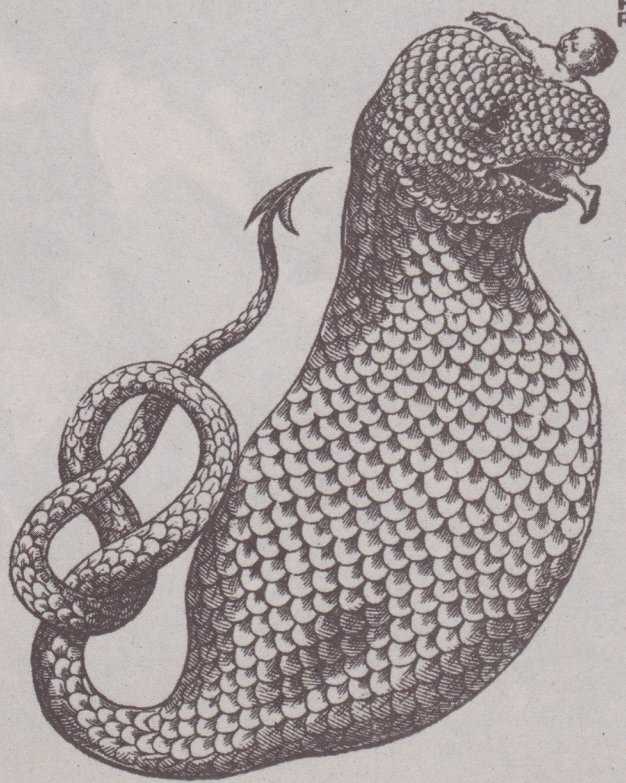

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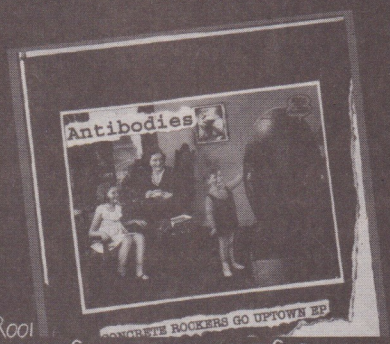

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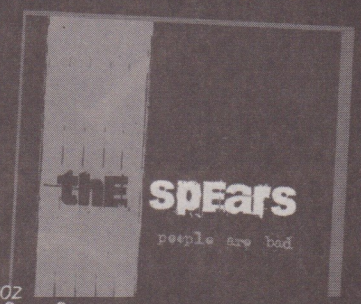

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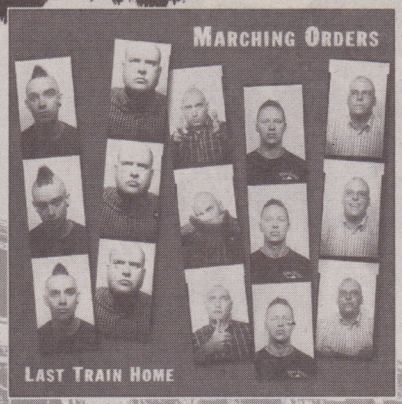

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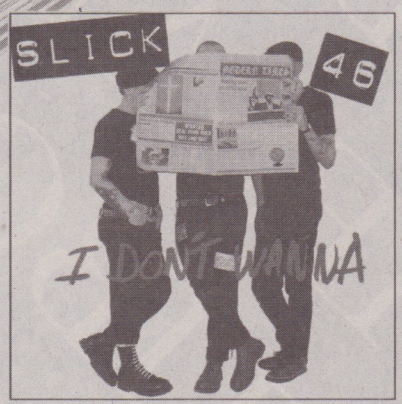

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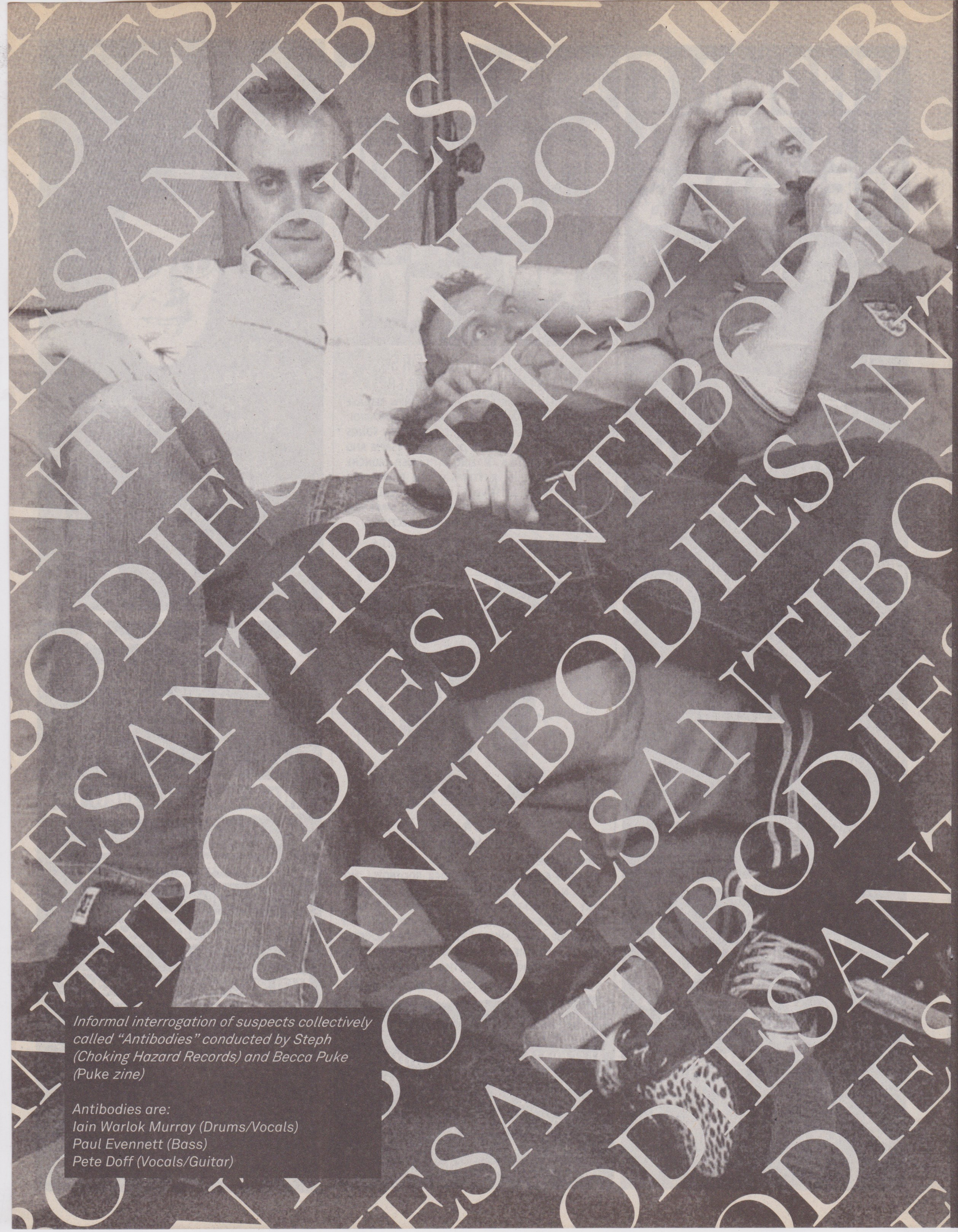

Informal interrogation of suspects collectively called "Antibodies" conducted by Steph (Choking Hazard Records) and Becca Puke (Puke zine)

Antibodies are:
Iain Warlok Murray (Drums/Vocals)
Paul Evennett (Bass)
Pete Doff (Vocals/Guitar)

MRR: Why Antibodies?

Pete: Because My Chemical Romance had already been taken... Initially I was going to go with Semtex Halo, then late one night whilst recording demos, I watched a bit of that old sci-fi movie Omega Man with Charlton "topless gun pervert" Heston and the word just kind of jumped out...this was before we formed as a band.

MRR: How and when did Antibodies form?

Iain: When I moved down to Harlow one of the first people I become friends with was Gaz. He was a guitarist who wanted to form a band. So I bought a really shit third-hand drum kit and had a go. We rehearsed and progressed then Gaz brought in a mystery bassist called Pete and that, my friends, was year zero for me in my musical education. Me and Pete hit it off and Antibodies was born—fucking ugly little baby it was too!

Pete: Since 1993 I had been writing tons of songs and recording them on a 4-track Portastudio, and though the chances of finding like-minded accomplices with who to form a band was absolutely zero, I kept giving out demo tapes to people who thought I were insane. Luckily, I met Warlok through a mutual friend, Gaz. He taught me to play guitar back in 1995 and thankfully, not only was he interested but he is a good fucking drummer! We remained as a two-piece, working on my songs as well as writing together. We picked up a bassist and managed to perform our first gig in December of '95. We only had four songs ready! Our bassist was shite but we just wanted to get moving. We recorded our first demo in March '96 and got favorable reviews; however, the bassist's limitations were becoming more than obvious so we managed to find a guy called Ken who was thankfully more competent. He also brought a sampler into our sound, so we made full use of it for random sound bites and noises in our set. We went back into the studio in '97 and again, the songs received good reviews. We played sporadically through those years but we tended to find the audiences more into pop-punk rather than home-grown, outspoken punk, and I certainly didn't want to sing "I met her at a punk rock show" for the opening of every song. We contributed tracks to many UK compilations as well as a track on a Beer City comp CD during this period, but gigs were getting harder to find and those we did play weren't that well-attended. We had a core of people coming to our shows who made it all worthwhile. By '99, Ken was playing up, and like a failing marriage we tried everything to keep him with us but ultimately it went tits-up. The two of us made a stack of 4-track recordings on which I played bass, and although the sound was pretty raw and primitive, we released it in 2001 as a DIY CD called Glamour of Backwardness. Again, we received good reviews, but we was fucked 'cos we couldn't go out and play live! We woke each day hoping to find a bassist! Our dreams came true in 2005 when we met Paul, who ironically attended some of our shows in the late '90s! In fact, I recall a local gig we played, and it was total mayhem—stage invasions, dry ice left on turning the room into dense fog, projectiles and missiles appearing out of the smoke—Paul was at the bottom of the stairs being tended to by paramedics! Paul's appearance within the band cemented us together musically and I think we found our true sound. He has added another element to the band that's been missing since we formed. So, as far as I am concerned this is the best of times.

MRR: How do you feel about the comparisons you receive?

Iain: Depends on the person who is giving us the comparisons! Lazy reviewers will liken us to the Sex Pistols and the first wave of British Punk Rock. Others listen and hear a huge scope of influences that dominate our music, from James Brown to Fugazi.

Pete: We have always been tagged as anarcho-punk, and I freely admit that I am influenced by Crass, Flux, Subhumans, Dead Kennedys, etc., but no more than I was by the Pistols, Clash, reggae, and Fugazi. So I never see Antibodies purely as anarcho-punk, and we draw influence from so many bands. Most of our comparisons are not necessarily wrong but not entirely right, if you know what I mean. We also get the Sex Pistols comparison, which again doesn't really fit. The three of us have different musical backgrounds and listen to a wide spectrum of music. I live today and avoid nostalgia where possible. I'm happy to be a punk band—classification beyond that is irrelevant and somewhat pointless, best left to trainspotters. Peter Don't Care of Suffragette zine and Nihilism on the Prowl webzine described us as "Concrete Rock." I like that. We live in a concrete monstrosity, a satellites London and was built after the Second World War specifically to house bombed-out Londoners. It's purely a residential town and of endless inspiration to me.

MRR: Is *Concrete Rockers Go Uptown* EP that Choking Hazard Records put out in 2007 your first release?

Pete: It's our first that wasn't self-released and our first ever vinyl. I still can't believe it sometimes! One thing that you learn quickly in bands is all the false promises and bullshit you receive. Steph at Choking Hazard is a fucking star for giving us this opportunity. The man is a hero in my books! This should've happened many years ago, but thanks to him we now have a EP that I'm dead proud of. What I find deeply annoying and also unhealthy is the amount of people that wanted to release stuff now that was shit in the '80s! It doesn't speak well of today when all you wanna do is release some third-rate nonsense from decades ago when there are so many good bands here and now! It's a crime! Not only that, but when I got into punk we would rip the piss out of the rock 'n' rollers and teddy boys 'cos they would wheelchair over all these aging, decrepit rock stars to play these revival shows—Bill Hailey and such. Now, punk, it seems, is going that way! The past is important in a historical context, not as a pension plan for bands that were crap anyway! Saying that there are bands

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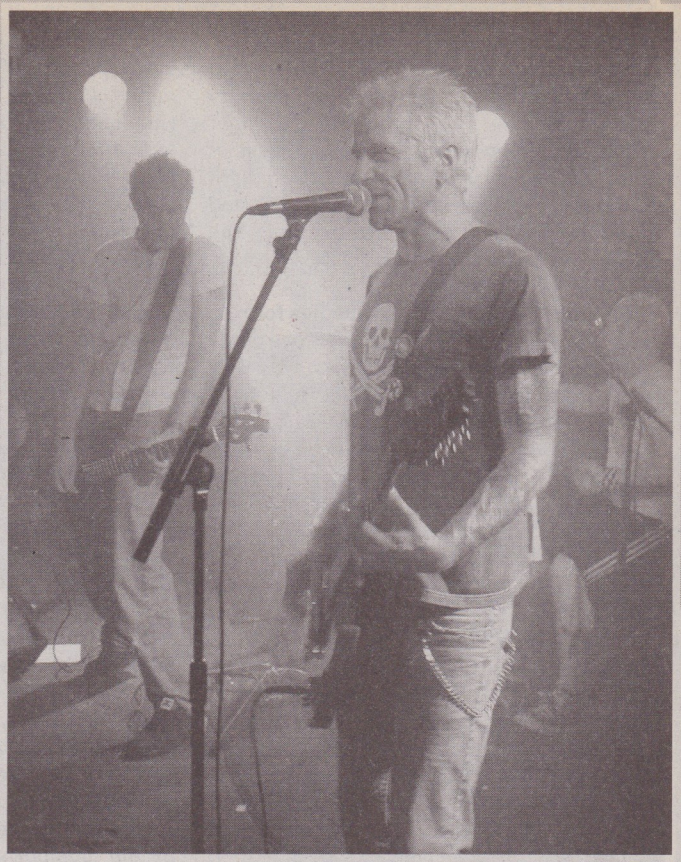

that never really stopped and still deliver and all the best to them but I've seen some fucking shocking sights lately... Their interests seem to lay more in the big payoff at the end of the night than what they're doing! Punk is about now! We played with a band not long ago and their songs were obviously written in '82 and we were pissing ourselves laughing 'cos all the references they used didn't exist anymore! We all hoped they had a "stop the Falklands War" song. We have so many songs that I think we could release an EP every month, before Paul joined us we already had over 130 songs! Even then we wouldn't rely on them for material, as we love writing new songs.

MRR: What are your influences?

Paul: I don't think I have any influences.

Iain: Coming from the northeast of England, heavy metal was the law. At the age of 13 or 14, I loved Sweet and Slade, then by the time I was 15 or 16, I started going to concerts at the Newcastle City Hall to see the likes of Judas Priest, Scorpions, UFO, etc. Everything was exciting until the day I saw Motörhead on the *Overkill* tour. I then saw through the cheap and nasty façade of the metal scene. Don't get me wrong—I've kept hold of some of my metal upbringing, hence the nickname Warlok, but it's all about taking the piss, ain't it? Thanks to Motörhead I started to cross over and begin to get into Ramones, Clash, Pistols, Stiff Little Fingers, Ruts, and big faves New York Dolls and Johnny Thunders. I love James Brown, Stooges, Small Faces, early Who. It's the insane amount of bands I like that influence me. Music is massive to me.

Pete: My influences range from the art of John Heartfield to the amazing selection of punk and post-punk music from 1976 to today. Art, literature, and music always inspire; although British graffiti artist Banksy is high on art collectors' shopping lists at the moment, I find a connection between his art and what I aspire to musically and lyrically. Kev Hunter, guitarist in Epileptics/Flux of Pink Indians, was a major influence to me as a guitarist. I find it somewhat odd when I hear people say they don't like UK or US punk—I'm always interested to hear how it manifests itself across the world.

MRR: What other bands have you been in?

Paul: I was a founding member of Pocket Donkey Club, a Harlow scenester band from the early '90s—feedback and tinny vocals, Screeching Weasel covers, and playing with our backs to the crowd (normally the sound guy and our girlfriends). Oddly, I still do the back-to-the-crowd thing now and I've just realized where the habit came from. Our debut self-released demo tape (*Anti-Grav Boots for the Wheelchair-Bound*) sold one copy to our friend Big Steve.

Iain: I messed about in a band back home in Sunderland in '83/'84—nothing serious, we couldn't play and it was more for posing! The guitarist thought he was Johnny Thunders and we had songs like "Hollywood Refugees" as well as covers of New York Dolls, Stooges, and Sex Pistols.

Pete: Apart from many bedroom band, my first real band was Obscene Toys, just another punk band of the early '80s—we were pretty shit, really, but I guess we would be touring America and Japan by now! Piss-taking aside, I did learn a lot from being in that band, especially in terms of songwriting. I also formed a side-project in 1981 called the Cum Stains—truly terrible, we had this disgusting gimmick of safety-pinning a condom, which we spat in to make it look used, on our t-shirts. In 2001 we released a DIY CD. We covered an old Obscene Toys song, although we changed the lyrics a bit and renamed it "NATO Pilot."

MRR: How long have you been in the punk scene?

Iain: I can't say I'm in the punk scene, to be honest, but I do understand it, warts and all!

Pete: So long that I piss safety pins daily! I happened to see the Sex Pistols being interviewed on the Grundy show and that was it for me...love at first sight!! The Ramones was the first punk record I ever owned and one of its best features was if you selected one channel on your stereo, you would get the tracks without guitar —absolutely perfect for guitar lessons!! Being so young back then, the older kids who I desperately wanted to befriend would dismiss me...with good reason I guess. But I needed their knowledge of bands in order to educate myself so I had to do it on my own and bought some shit records in the process. That's why a lot of people into punk from my generation adored DJ John Peel so much—he was the only outlet for punk in isolated towns like Harlow. I didn't just want to be a spectator; even back then I wanted to get involved. The initial punk wave here was slightly out of reach to me due to my young age, but when the second wave arrived I was able to go to many shows and explore the streets of London and fully immerse myself in the scene. As much as I occasionally look back with fondness to those days, the reality was a lot more volatile—there was a lot of violence in and around me and I suffered many attacks in the old days.

Paul: I was a roadie for a Harlow band when I was 16 and got to tour around the UK and Europe with the likes of Sloppy Seconds, The Queers, and Down By Law. It's an odd coincidence that Hunter, the old drummer from Down By Law when I toured with them back in '93 or '94, is now in The Spears, who also have a single out on Choking Hazard Records.

MRR: What is the local scene like in Harlow?

Iain: There isn't a scene in Harlow—there used to be with the likes of Travis Cut, Fair Dinkum, and Mainline, but now there's only us and a great young band called The Seminals.

Pete: It alternates between a bleak, post-nuclear landscape and bursts of creativity. Our local venue, The Square, is under threat of closure. It's a crying shame, as it's the only cultural point in the whole town. It's held some amazing gigs over the years, but sadly many changes have occurred lately and at the moment it's pretty much a teens-only place whereas before it was all-ages. Punk has never been a dominant force here, but

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it's encouraging to see so many young new bands forming.

MRR: How did it feel to finally get a single released?
Iain: To get a 7" out is wonderful! Bring on the album!

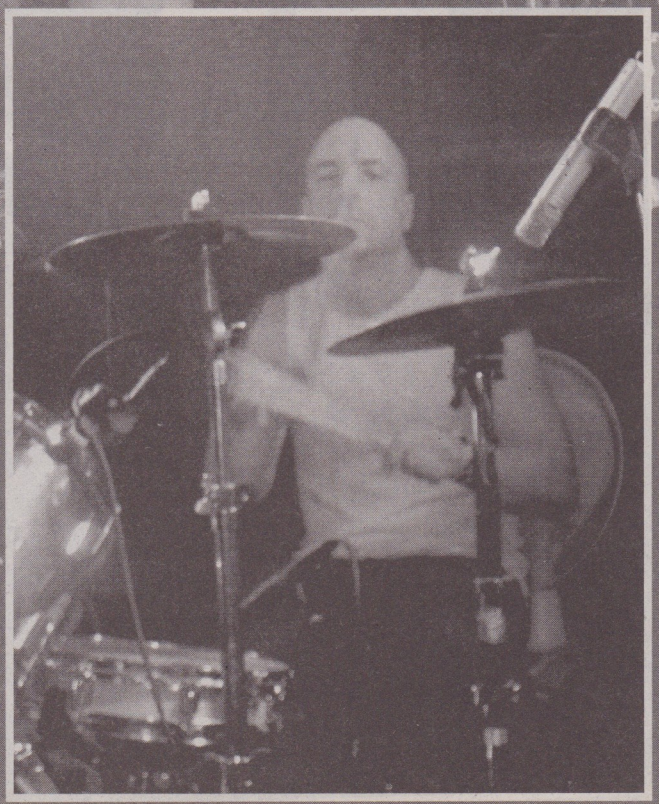
Pete: Extremely happy!! I'm still buzzing now!! Getting the artwork together was fun, 'cos, like the songs, there is literally an archive of material to draw upon. I decided I wanted to do something new and collage is as much fun as performing with the band.
Paul: I'd say it was a dream come true, but the truth is I never even dreamed it would happen. When I first got hold of one I showed it to my Mum and Dad—they told me it was nice.

MRR: How has punk evolved in your experience?
Pete: I think it needs to keep re-inventing itself every few years to stop the rot setting in. I'm still a firm believer in punk, and its accessibility is its greatest value—as long as it stays that way, it will always be with us. I believe you should never put full stops on your thoughts, and although I don't have many answers, I have fuck-loads of questions. When the lyrics and the music come together, it's a magical moment for me. Punk has always had that ability to inform, amuse, impress, and inspire. Although there are situations that get on my tits—egos and rock star attitudes—there's still much good going on and it's important to maintain that.

MRR: What is the most unexpected response you have ever received?
Iain: Being asked, "Would you like to release a 7"?"

MRR: What have you learned from being in Antibodies?
Iain: The biggest thing I've learned is to not be afraid if you can't play—if you have the balls, you will pick it up and you will create your own unique sound and style, 'cos no one has force-fed to you any rules, and that's the essence of punk rock to me.
Pete: Keep away from the drum kit to avoid splinters, hide when the drum kit has to be taken up several flights of stairs, always say things to an audience that go completely over their heads, and never surrender! We always moan at each other about playing too fast at gigs, which really isn't a problem as such, but the truth is we individually want to go faster so it gets a bit mental sometimes. That's all part of enjoying shows. Also, beware of bands that have Spinal Tap mentality! They're the ones that use all the bands' soundcheck time fine-tuning things that don't need fine-tuning.
Paul: I've learned never to gig in London—you go on stage before the doors open, when the doors do open, you play to 20 screaming chairs because the promoters never bother doing any promotion, and then, to cap off a wonderful night, you will always get a parking ticket, and it smells funny. London can fuck off.

MRR: What inspires the music, lyrics, and artwork?
Pete: Before Paul joined, all the writing was down to me in terms of tunes and lyrics, and Warlok contributed to the arrangements and other ideas—but now it's very much a band effort in terms of song creation. Beyond the band, when I look out the window or walk the streets, I'm always inspired by the madness that goes on around me—it's almost like that movie They Live, where I have the sunglasses that let you see through the bullshit and bollocks. However, I don't claim to be all-knowing! There are also many external influences—the artwork of Gee from Crass, Winston Smith, and Jamie Reid, and so many great bands who continue to impress and influence me. I'm always conscious of the fact that I don't want to sit down and say, "OK, I'm gonna write an anti-war song." I can't do it! I'd rather just sit and naturally write things down. I don't write in a linear fashion and I've noticed my lyrics are more like my collages—bits of things thrown together—so sometimes one song can touch upon many different subjects. It's always fun to read how someone else interprets the song, 'cos, to be honest, sometimes they'll point something out that I wasn't even aware of! For example, the EP cover has a picture of a family in the living room, and the little boy is stroking an atomic bomb. Peter Don't Care said, "Oh yeah, little boy and big boy," the names of the atomic bombs. I'll be honest and say I didn't think that when I made it. I like to write using my own experience. I may not have many—if any—answers, but I'm always full of questions. Or full of shit, depending on your point of view! Question everything and make a hell of noise about it.
Paul: I'm inspired to make a noise that no one's ever heard before. Play a bass line backwards or upside down and make people feel a bit odd after seeing us. Hopefully we don't sound how people expect us to, for better or worse. At least we're not predictable.



MRR: What plans do you have for 2008?

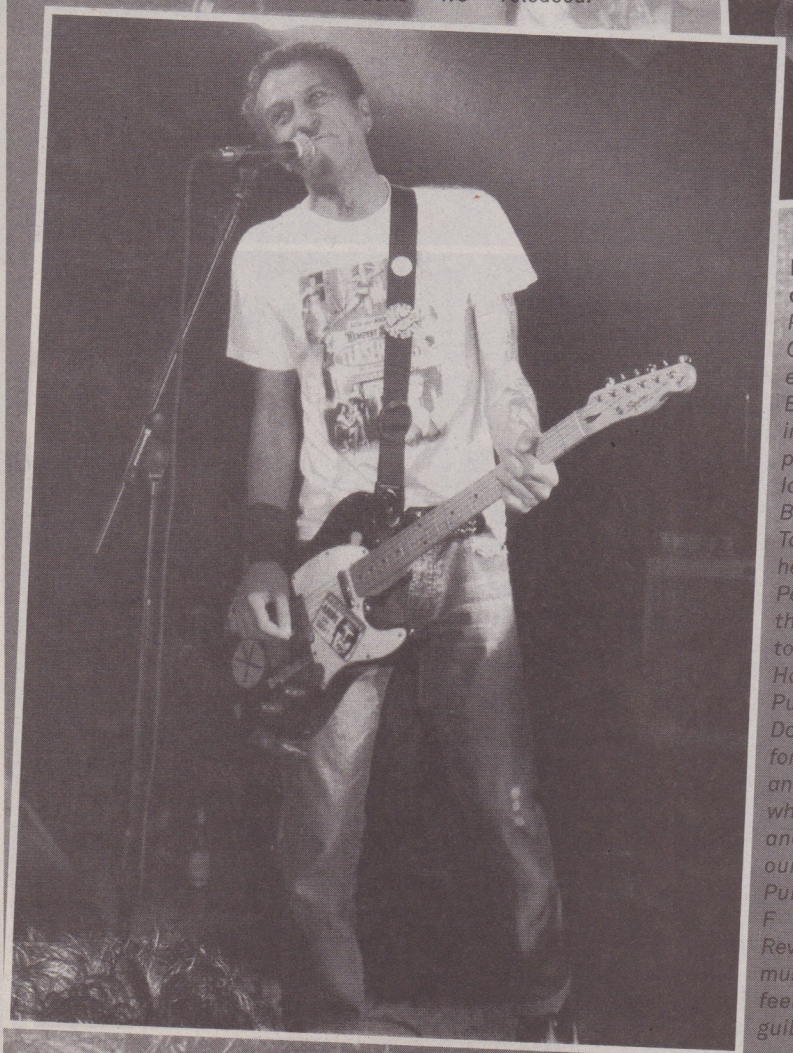
Iain: To release an album. Personally, I would love to tour Europe, Canada, and America—everywhere and anywhere—before I explode behind me drums!

Pete: More gigs ideally, I'd love to play in Canada and meet Steph...we have an appointment with beer!! Just keep writing. We pride ourselves on having a reasonably fluid set list. I can't think of a time where there hasn't been a new song in any given set list. I think we all have short attention spans! We are going into the studio soon to begin recording our debut album.

Paul: Get the album recorded, tour North America and Europe. Write that concept album we've been noodling with based on a Masai tribeswomen's daily struggle to educate herself whilst providing for her parents and siblings (Working title: Self-Raising Flower.)

MRR: Any details on the forthcoming album?

Pete: At the moment we are still writing—we never really stop—but we want to make it sixteen tracks. We always seem to write something new, so the best we can do is record them in rehearsal, and then we will have to sit down together and decide what tracks we want to use. We hope that it will be both vinyl and CD, and as far as artwork goes I haven't really started...I keep a shoebox full of images I rip out off newspapers and magazines, and when the time comes, I'm sure they'll be something I can throw together. I have several ideas for the title, but again, once we decide what tracks were going to use, we will book the studio, and then it will all fall into place. The one thing we all agree on is that we won't issue any songs on the album that have been previously released.



MRR: Any final comments?

Paul: Wilfred Owen's "Dulcet et Decorum Est" is written in loose iambic pentameter.

Iain: I can see Blackpool Tower from here!

Pete: King size thank you's go to Choking Hazard, Becca Puke, Peter Don't Care, MRR for the interview, and to everybody who supports us and encourages our behaviour. Punk was the French Revolution of the music world and I feel somewhat guilty that we didn't send all those fucking old farts to the guillotine all those years ago, so here we are in 2008—as much as I love being in Antibodies, I still want to see Paul McCartney beheaded and Bon Jovi burnt at the stake, as I think their hair maybe exceptionally flammable! Please feel free to drop us a line at: pete_antibodies@hotmail.com

Studio recordings:

Demo CD (1996): England's Atrocities/ A Town Called Drab/ Viva Shoplifting/ Fucked if I Know

Demo CD (1997): England's Atrocities/ Wotappen?/ I Ruin Everything/ Spastikkk/ Cracked Unit/ C.U.N.T

Demo CD (2004): England's Atrocities/ Kamikazi Karaoke/ Easymeat/ Glamour of Backwardness/ Game of Soldiers

Demo CD (2006): I Ruin Everything/ Concrete Cancer/ Assassinate Me

Concrete Rockers Go Uptown EP (Choking Hazard, 2007): Reality Cheque/ Plan B/ Hymns for Dregs/ Glamour of Backwardness

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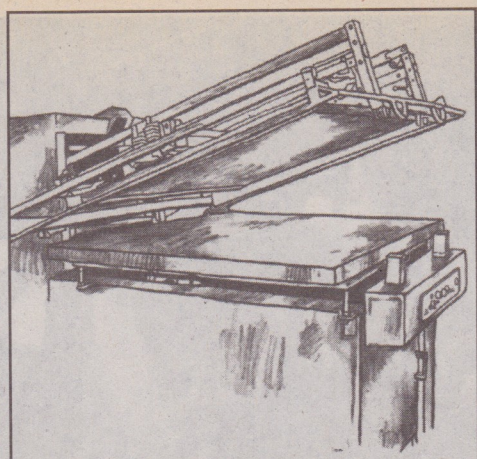

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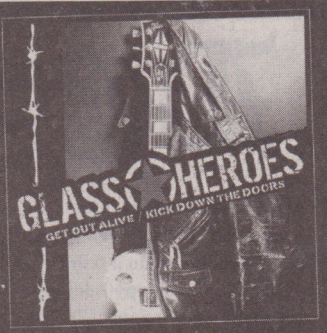

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DEAN DIRG

I often spend a whole day enclosed in my room listening non-stop to late-'70s doom and pure black metal, but then I always need a punk-rock party break. Dean Dirg is my favourite dessert for this menu. Always fresh, sweet, and pleasurable as a piece of cake wrapped in hot, black chocolate cream! And don't be mistaken thinking that I am talking about a tea party, because this is just the start of the wildest night, including police cars on fire, your annoying neighbours landing in their smelly graves, and the lady of your dreams staring in your stoned eyes.
Interview by Panos Asthma of Mountza Fancream.

MRR: Some years after you're dead from drugs or from being too straight edge, some people decide to do a tribute to you. What would you prefer, a crappy bootleg or a MySpace profile dedicated to you?
Börge: When that day comes, there'll be enough Dean Dirg junk on the net, our own rotting profile for example, so we'd definitely go for the crappy bootleg.

MRR: You have been using MySpace for quite long time now. What motivated you to start this profile and what is the benefit of having it, since you have enough records released and an awesome band website? How do you feel that before your name somebody will type "MySpace.com?" Isn't more or less like typing cocacola.com/deandirg? I am not judging, but I have been wondering why bands use it so heavily.
Börge: It's an easy, convenient platform for people who are nerds without knowing HTML and shit like that. There's nothing wrong with using services like MySpace, as long as you don't rely too much on it. Actually, we don't feel it's that important to us anymore, but we don't feel like we have to cancel our account to be more punk.

MRR: You have been friends for quite a long time—since you were at the same school, if I'm not wrong. What made you start the band and what would you do if somebody decided to leave? Would Dean Dirg continue without all the original members?
Börge: When we started ten years ago, we were basically very pissed off at everything and all four of us loved classic punk and HC. We started off doing cover songs of the usual suspects like Black Flag, TSOL, etc. We did music before and felt like it was the right time to get a snotty band started. Dean Dirg has always been four friends playing together and if we can't continue with this set line-up, we will probably just quit.

MRR: There are tons of bad bands out, playing the same known riffs, having nothing fresh and new to give. If somebody knew nothing about your band, how would you motivate him or her to check you out? In your own opinion, what's the special thing about Dean Dirg that makes you different from other bands?
Börge: We really absolutely mean it. Plus, our guitars are not too distorted.

MRR: What has influenced you to do what you are doing with Dean Dirg, and where does the influence stop and Dean Dirg begin?
Börge: We are influenced by classics from all kinds of genres, including classic punk, classic hardcore, classic rap, and classic teenage problems, which probably makes Dean Dirg look very different, but actually we're not. We're pissed and we play hardcore, just less boring than the other bands.

MRR: What's the reason for each one of you playing in this band? What keeps you involved?
Börge: It's fun to play, to meet people with similar (everyday) problems, to simply go apeshit, and nearly pass out after two songs.

MRR: You recently released a new record. What are your feelings about the final result? You told me it was recorded at a studio that doesn't perfectly fit with your sound. How come you ended up there again? The album also has some new elements included, such as this old school hip-hop track. Should we expect more experimentation from your sound in the future?
Börge: We went for the same studio again, and after we had a serious talk about the sound, were pretty happy with the results this time. We had to record pretty quickly, and having a studio nearly next door to where you store your equipment is a big help. We're really satisfied with the results. People shouldn't expect a rap album from us, but doing a song like that felt like a pretty natural thing to do for us. We are into honest rap as much as into punk or HC. If it got spirit, hit it. Listening to punk all day got boring years ago.

MRR: Then start listening to Black Metal, too. Dean Dirg has been touring and acting as a DIY band. You did all the tours by organizing them on your own. You have also played some more official gigs. Where do you find yourselves nowadays? Do you still feel part of the modern DIY scene? Are you satisfied by the way the autonomous-squat scene works out? If you had to change something in the modern punk scene, what would that be?

Börge: We rarely have any classic leftist political statements in our lyrics, but that scene is where we feel at home, where we feel understood. DIY is often a great way to have power over what you do, even if it means a lot more work. I think because our lyrics are more personal than political, people tend to think we don't give a shit. But the people who know us know better.

MRR: True, you don't give a fucking shit. A very special thing about Dean Dirg is the mighty performances you give. What gives you so much energy and passion that motivates you to smash up everything on stage, and how do you manage to do it even if the crowd doesn't deserve it at all?
Börge: There's always somebody in the crowd who deserves a good show. And apart from giving the people a good time, we go crazy because we love our songs. They're good and we like smashing shit listening to them. We don't care if the audience doesn't.

MRR: You have toured the mainland of Europe quite a lot. You also played gigs in southern and eastern parts of Europe, which are not the most popular places for touring, compared to Scandinavia or Germany. Where did have your best experiences touring and playing gigs, which places haven't you been to, and why?
Börge: We can't say which country/region was the best to tour. On every tour we were lucky to meet awesome people who really worked their asses off to give punk bands the chance to tour and spread culture. Except for you.

MRR: I don't regret giving you bad experiences. Are there offers for a US or Asian tour? Do you feel that scenes outside Europe have paid enough attention to Dean Dirg? German bands are some of favorites nowadays (except yours). At the same time, I feel that the independent media in the US or other scenes haven't supported the German scene enough, while they push the Swedish scene too much, for example. Do you agree with that and what's your experience on this topic?
Börge: There have been a lot of requests to tour the US, and hopefully later this year we will manage to find the time to play there since our new album *...Raus!!* is being released on Six Feet Under Records. It feels like we get a lot of attention in other countries. About the Swedish hype, it seems definitely very easy for Swedish bands to tour everywhere, but that's probably because there are a *lot* of *very* good Swedish bands around like Henry Fiat's Open Sore, the Regulations, Insurgent Kid, etc., so people probably tend to generalize and say "Swedish bands rule."

MRR: I have asked you that before, but since we're doing a new interview for a different audience, I would like to know how political Dean Dirg as band feels and what are the issues that you decide to scream about in your lyrics.
Börge: People may consider us a political band, because we complain about social issues, because we are pissed off about jobs, bratwurst, and Nazis. Some people probably consider us a non-political band, because we don't offer any answers to any of those problems and don't have a political agenda on our album. We're just trying to play snotty music for those who care, and that's enough revolution for one band.

MRR: Are political issues seriously alive in the German punk scene in these days or is it something that has faded away through the years? How much do you really care about punk rock being something more than music, and are you doing something about it on a personal and band level?
Börge: There'll always be different, coexisting punk rock "scenes." We consider "our scene" to be ourselves and the like-minded people and bands with whom we are friends. Among those are people who don't even care about hardcore music. Generally, politics and social issues will always be around in punk rock; there will always be something in it "losers" can relate to, something that turns rock into punk rock.

MRR: Do you believe that a contract with an official, commercial label would push Dean Dirg to do something better? If you had the offer to get signed, what would you do and why?

Börge: We aren't sure really what good that would bring us. We are definitely not as critical of commercialism as many other people in punk. But since we are pretty big control freaks when it comes to our songs, our gigs, and our artwork, it would have to be a very, very generous contract. Also, the idea that playing for 5000 people is always better than playing for 20 people in a basement is bullshit.

MRR: Some of you are vegan, if I'm not wrong. How can you accept people who don't eat feta and tzatziki within the band? Is that Dean Dirg, correct?
Börge: Despite the fact that Dean Dirg eats feta and sometimes takes a piss in people's shoes, we probably have a positive PC balance. Maybe. Do we? Probably.

MRR: One of the things pissing me off nowadays is the lack of imagination in the artwork for most new releases. It seems like two out of five bands do '70s revival punk cover artwork, two do something that has been repeated thousands of times, and in the end there is only one band doing something really outstanding. You put a lot of effort to your artwork. Who is doing it and what are you trying to reach through good artwork?
Börge: Torsten does it in cooperation with the other members, who have a veto right. Good HC/punk artwork contains a subjective message and manages to look like a punk record without looking like the other punk records. It keeps the balance between new ideas and the usual symbolism that says "proudly made by people with problems."

MRR: Your new release is out on Cage Match Federation/Wasted Sounds and some others. What are your criteria for picking one label over another? How important is having a good label and what do you consider a realistically good label within the punk scene?
Börge: An ideal label means minimum work and worries and maximum artistic control and promotion. It's all about having your records available in many places for a fair price. That'll give you more chances to play shows and travel, which is the best thing about being in a hardcore band.

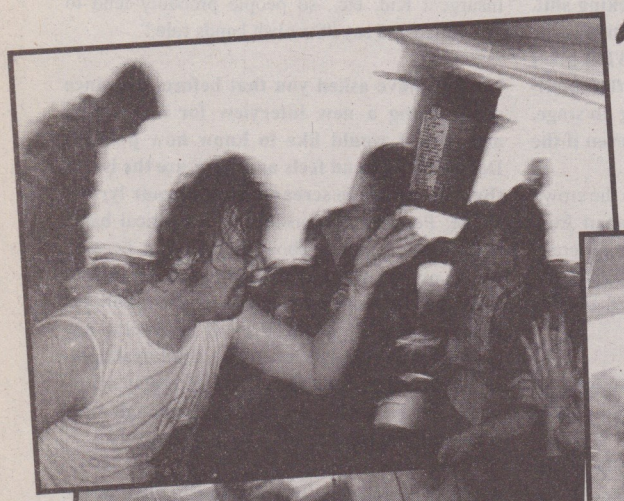
MRR: If Nazi aliens were kidnapping you because you are the ugliest people on Earth and the only right you were left with was to have one type of food, one drink, and one record for the rest of your life, what would they be?
Börge: We don't care about the food, as long as it's veggie and there's a lot of it. And thinking of having to listen to one record for the rest of our lives makes the choice for the drink easy. We'll go for Coke Zero laced with strychnine.

MRR: If Doph had to change his outlook or to stop singing, what would you motivate him to do?
Börge: We tried both; neither worked.

MRR: Is punk rock alive or not? If yes, prove it with few words!
Börge: Depends on the definition of punk... Let's stop here.

THE END

DEAN DIRG



HEAD ON COLLISION

It's official: thrash is back! Once again, you have thousands of bands throughout the world taking the best of hardcore and metal and combining them to play what is known as "thrash." It's not like this hasn't happened before. Thrash has been going since its conception in the early '80s. While it never completely went away, it took a back seat for quite some time. That is, until recently. Within the huge sea of thrash bands, one that stands out is St. Louis, Missouri's Head-On Collision. After signing a three-album deal with Beer City Records, doing a West Coast tour, and getting back from mixing their debut album Ritual Sacrifice, *we sat down to talk to them. Here is what they had to say.*

MRR: So who plays what?
John: I play guitar. Pat plays guitar and does vocals. Jason plays drums. Our bass player quit, so we're looking for a new one.

MRR: So, Pat, when did you start Head-On Collision?
Pat: The band started in early 2003. It took until August of 2006 to find the right members that were willing to put in serious effort to play this music, make records, and tour.

MRR: So, why thrash? Why not hardcore or crust punk or some other more lucrative thing that people seem to be more into?
Pat: Well, this is the type of music I've wanted to play since the late '80s, but unfortunately there's not an abundance of musicians in St. Louis who want to do this music. I've played in punk and hardcore bands for years. I love that stuff, but I've been dying to play this stuff forever.
John: That's what I wanted to do. It's fast like punk rock or hardcore but it has the heaviness and riffing of metal. There are a lot of shitty modern styles of metal out there. I want to play this style for people who have never heard it before. You know, they hear Metallica and they think, you know, dudes driving Camaros and image and shit, so I want to play it more for people to expand their musical horizons. Also, you know, clearly for thrash and metal fans in general.
Pat: I think that some people have the wrong impression of metal in general, and we want to get out there and give our take on it.

MRR: There seems to be a resurgence of thrash metal right now.
Pat: I think it's cool and necessary because, for years, there was nothing like it—for years music crossed over and over and it's like a big blender of subgenres. Catchy, riff-driven songs have been replaced by cramming ten different genres into one song with a distorted guitar. I gotta have some riffs and hooks. I think now it's back to the basics, where hardcore and punk and metal merged, and I think a lot of young people need to know about that and actually want to. That's what I think about when putting music together for this band.
John: That's what I think, too. It's a lot of hardcore kids coming in and seeing that this stuff existed, and they like it. Metalheads that have had to filter through billions of death metal, emo, screamo and whatever else for the last decade or so seem to be craving something a little more human-sounding.

MRR: So what makes Head-On Collision different than other newer bands?
Pat: We realize the roots of thrash, which are the heavy riffs of early metal mixed with the attitude, speed, and aggression of '80s fast punk and hardcore.
John: I think it's the effort we put into the music, but I also think it's the absence of being image-conscious and relying more on the riffs and songs. We're totally straightforward. We're not fashion conscious. We dress the way we always have dressed. We're a dress-code-free band. I just mean, we all don't feel the need to have a band image or anything.
Pat: We're just individuals playing what we like to play. No image necessary. Nothing against any band that isn't like us; we do find it entertaining when others do it. It's just not what we choose to do.
Jason: I think we sound a little different from a lot of the newer bands around. Instead of simply trying to rewrite the past, we just do what comes naturally.

MRR: So, St. Louis—let's talk about the scene and what's going on right now.
Pat: The scene in general has really started to reach a peak, to be honest. I've always thought that, in the late '90s and into the '00s, things died down for a while, but then a lot of younger bands and musicians started coming around, playing house shows and hall shows. We have had an all-ages venue issue for quite a while now. There are very few bar venues doing all-ages shows, and the ones that are here don't really have too many shows that aren't "pay to play" or "bands selling tickets." We avoid these types of venues and promoters. Many people with a taste for the more underground styles of extreme music tend to do the same. There are so many great bands doing different styles of metal, punk, and hardcore: Whoppers Taste Good, Cross Examination, Harkonin, Humanoids, Powers Court, Kings of Summer, Kids On Fire, Holy Python, Sweating Bullets. I could go on forever. There are also a lot of new venues popping up that seem to be all right so far. There are always house, hall, or basement shows. We have a metal specialty shop in the county here called Now Hear This that stocks a good selection of underground metal CDs. A little homespun record store called APOP recently opened as well. They have a decent selection of punk and metal and they keep growing into a

pretty good place. There are a lot of bands coming out of St. Louis now that are touring and getting their name out there, which always helps things back home as well. Out-of-town bands see St. Louis bands in their city, and it sometimes makes these bands want to come here, which is awesome.

John: I think scenes are growing everywhere right now. Young kids are discovering the kind of stuff we like, and they really seem to be craving it. We saw a lot of younger faces on tour.

MRR: Let's talk about your most recent tour. Where did you go and what was it like out there?

Pat: We played Cache, Oklahoma; San Antonio, Austin, and El Paso, Texas; Tempe, Arizona; Downey, San Mateo, Pacifica, Concord, and Sacramento, California: Salt Lake City, Utah; and Denver, Colorado. There were two shows in Sacto. We had to cancel a show in Bakersfield because of auto problems.

MRR: What was it like meeting Billy Milano?

Pat: He lived up to his reputation.

Jason: He told us to fuck off.

John: Then he came on our bus and called us assholes after the show. He also offered to barbecue for us the following afternoon, but we partied until like 8 a.m., so we didn't make it.

MRR: Let's talk about past bands or projects you guys were involved in.

John: I've been in a couple bands. The first band I was in here in St. Louis was crap, so I'm not gonna talk about it. Then I was in a band called Fifth Row Felons, which wasn't really my preferred style, but those guys got drunk and that was fun for me. Then I was in Cardiac Arrest, which was in *MRR* not too long ago. I was the phantom metal guitar player for a little while until I joined this band.

Pat: I've been in a billion bands over the years, but only two really worth talking about. I played in Very Metal for eight years. We put out a self-released 7" in 1996, a 7" on Beer City in 1996 as well, two full-lengths in 2000 and 2001, and made a bunch of comp appearances. We did a small amount of touring throughout those years as well. I was also involved in a grindcore project called Lucifer D. Larynx and the Satanic Grind Dogs of Death. We were on a couple split records, one with Dahmer. We also were on several comps and released three demo tapes, which really spread around at the time. We've talked about doing it again sometime soon.

Jason: I've been in a lot of bands, but the best one was Sayonara, who were a powerviolence band.

MRR: How often do you guys play shows and tour? How often do you plan on doing it as time goes on?

Pat: We play out as much as possible, even locally. Some people think you shouldn't play out often locally because it'll hurt turnouts, but to be honest, we play for different people locally every time we play. We do shows in different parts of the city, and the surrounding counties, including Illinois. People who live in Illinois, which is only 20 minutes away from us, don't really want to drive 45 minutes to a show in, say, Overland, Missouri, so we play those areas. I always think of St. Louis as a bunch of small towns that make up a city. We play a bunch of venues as often as possible, and it gives us good experience playing in front of an audience. On a touring level, we want to tour as much as we can. We want to reach as many people as possible. Our main objective is to always be playing for new people and making new friends. I'm really proud of what I do, and I want people to hear it.

MRR: Let's talk about the label and the upcoming CD.

Pat: We have a full-length coming out on Beer City really soon called *Ritual Sacrifice*. It's eleven thrashing songs. Joe Petagno did the cover art and it's fucking amazing. Me and Jason and our pal Damon just finished mixing it up at Walls Have Ears studios in Milwaukee with engineer Bill Stace.

John: A big shout-out to anyone who came to see us and helped us out along the way.

Pat: Everybody was really hospitable during this tour. Of the 20 days out, we only had to sleep in the bus a few nights. No hotels or anything. We met some incredible people on this tour and made great new friends. We were lucky to play some really great shows with some really great bands, like Blood Of Patriots, Blunt Force Trauma, SMD, Vektor, Concrete Coffin, Psychosomatic, Havok, and several others. My old band had been on tours that were nowhere near this easy or beneficial, especially considering his was our first time in those areas.

John: Again, if you helped us out, thanks.

Pat: Meeting some of the people that played in bands I really liked growing up and actually hanging out with them was really fun as well. Felix Griffin, ex-drummer of DRI now plays with Blunt Force Trauma. He showed me around Austin and introduced us to Billy Milano.

John: Talking with Jack Gibson of Exodus was cool.

MRR: How did you get Petagno to do the cover?

Pat: We just asked him. (laughs)

MRR: So why Beer City?

Pat: I've worked with Beer City before. I know the label has really grown, and I like working with them. They plan on spending a lot of time and effort on us, and that's more or less why. We approached some bigger labels a while back that weren't interested at the time because, in their words, "we're not releasing thrash because it doesn't sell." They started showing interest, but I really don't want to be a shelved band when thrash isn't popular anymore. Beer City is going to do everything they can to make sure we do some killer stuff. I also think it's pretty awesome to be on a label that released records for bands like DRI, MDC, the Motherfuckers, and so

many others. So far he's put a lot into us for the art and studio for the full-length.

MRR: What influences Head-On Collision?

Pat: I grew up on '80s hardcore, punk, crossover, and metal. Everything from the Damned to early Corrosion Of Conformity to Battalion of Saints, Discharge to Wehrmacht to Sodom; the obvious influences like Exodus, Razor, Sacrifice, Kreator; late '70s and early '80s metal, even Black Sabbath. I like a lot of British punk and hardcore. I love thrash metal the most and of course I listen to obscure shit no one knows about. Blah, blah, blah, I could go on forever.

John: The Accused.

Jason: Nile.

John: We're all in the same boat though. I think thrash metal is the perfect mix of all the best elements of all the stuff we like.

MRR: Let's talk about the songwriting.

Pat: I write most of the riffs, I arrange them, record them with a drum machine, bring them to practice, and let the guys pick at them and add their own elements. I used to write all the lyrics too, but John has stepped up and written some good stuff and plans on writing more in the future. I try to put a lot of thought into the music. I rarely write riffs on a guitar. I usually come up with them in my head, and the ones that stick in my head end up becoming the ones I use.

John: We'll see the template of how we write songs expand and broaden a bit.

MRR: We touched on St. Louis earlier. It was the number-one crime city last year, only to be beaten by Detroit this year. Does that affect your songwriting and Head-On Collision in general?

Pat: I think it does. Personally, living in St. Louis brings out a certain level of aggression that would get me into trouble if I wasn't getting those feelings out playing music. I think it has as big of an influence on us as the bands we just talked about. I think my friend Jeff Reagan, who grew up here and now lives in Seattle, put it best when he said, "St. Louis is a drunk and very pissed-off city." It definitely influences what we do. The only complaint that I have about St. Louis is that people tend to hate everything and everyone and are overall just cynical. One thing that bugs me is that a lot of people think they're cool if they say don't like anything, especially when it comes to music. If I can't talk about good bands with people, I get bored with them really fast. People who hate everything just get redundant to be around.

John: I know if I wasn't playing this music right now there would be one more criminal roaming the streets smashing skulls.

Jason: Bumwine is awesome.

MRR: Let's talk a little about metal. There seem to be gobs of bands popping up. Headbanger's Ball is back on MTV. There are metal radio shows again. What is your take on the metal scene in general?

Pat: Headbanger's Balls and the radio don't really play stuff I want to hear. It's the same as it was 20 years ago. Radio and MTV sell image, not music. Today there's "butt metal" just like there was in the late '80s, only with different packaging. Back then it was poofy hair, eyeliner, and makeup. Now it's comb-over hair and eyeliner. Somehow it always involves eyeliner. In my opinion this isn't what metalheads want to hear. That music is like metal with pop-sauce. Headbanger's Ball hasn't changed. I remember being at parties that would have it on back in its heyday. You'd have to sit through 90% of their show, seeing videos from bands like White Lion, just to get maybe one or two videos from bands like Pestilence, Carcass, or the Cro-Mags. The same goes for radio. Even the Sirius or XM stations are crap. I couldn't imagine paying for radio and listening to that "heavy verse/soft chorus" metal all day long to occasionally hear a song I like. Fuck that!

John: Corporate media doesn't want to see that stuff on their stations or channels. I guess they think it would scare off advertisers.

Pat: Bands that play anything remotely similar to us have to claw their way out to be heard. Do it yourself and hope for the best!

John: If you're not a metalcore "Between The Ashes My Dying Wake This Thursday" rip-off band you're not going to be heard there.

Pat: Butt metal.

John: They don't market music, they market the image of the music—which has been softened up for teenage girls who are at the mall buying CDs. It's as if they don't even care if anyone else is buying music or not. I've worked at a couple of clubs around here. All you'd ever seeing is these floppy haired, eyeliner-wearing fifteen-year-olds crying about their girlfriends in a soft heartfelt part, followed by a Metallica riff. It's rare that you see a punk kid or a hardcore kid around here anymore. They're still here.

Pat: At the same time, I think it's cool that music I grew up liking has maybe influenced some of these bands, but seriously, the way that lame mainstream culture has watered it down is obvious and intolerable! No more comb-overs and eyeliner!

John: At least more kids are maybe trying to listen to stuff that is a little more intense and non-mainstream. Let's see if they can stumble upon the better stuff they seem to have no idea about now. Enough with all the Britney Spears and "My Broken Dove Lays Dying" bands playing in high schools.

Jason: What?

Pat: One day we'll be playing their high schools. *(laughs)*

MRR: So what can we expect from Head-On Collision in the near and distant future?

John: This is exactly what I want to do. I dropped out of college because I didn't really know what I wanted to do with my life. I love music and it's all I want to do.

Pat: Expect us on tour all the time. Whenever we fucking can. We'll bring you the best thrash metal we possibly can. We really enjoy doing this!

John: Get out there and support music!

Jason: Thrash or Die! Bumwine!

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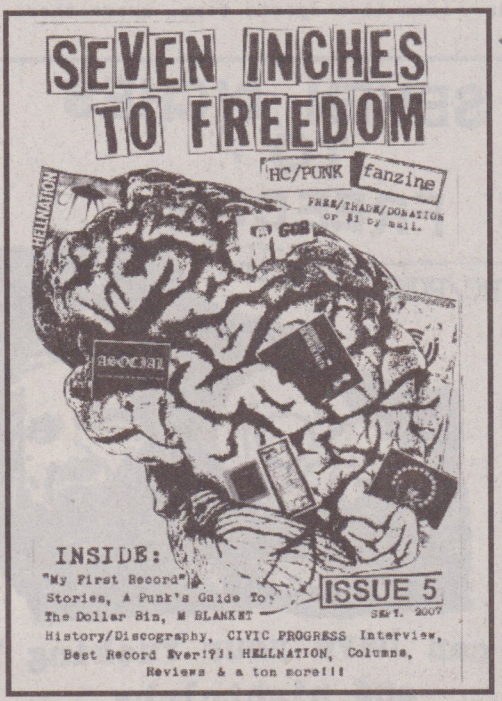
SEVEN INCHES TO FREEDOM

HC/PUNK fanzine

Seven Inches to Freedom *is a small, cut-and-paste, copied zine put together by Joe Lachut in Fort Myers, Florida. It has a mix of scrutiny and praise of overlooked and underappreciated records by Joe and punks across the world. Add to that some nostalgia by kids first getting submerged in the scene, opinion pieces by Joe and others, assortments of articles like D.I.Y. guides, punk and hardcore histories, and a ton of other shit.* Seven Inches to Freedom *fills a void in the music-zine genre by getting you excited about music and never gets weighted down by pointless interviews and reviews. Besides reminding punks of the best aspects of our music that are sometimes easy to forget and being one of the best US zines out there right now,* Seven Inches to Freedom *is free. Introduction and interview by John Fahy.*

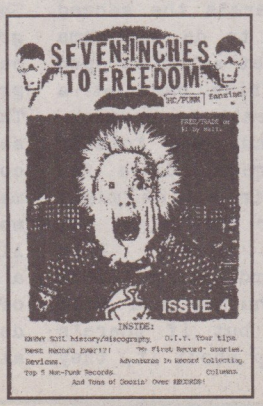
MRR: Why did you start *Seven Inches To Freedom* and what did you want to accomplish by starting this zine?
The point was to expose people to records and bands that aren't really covered and are underrated, that I feel are important. That, and I'm always down to talk about DIY or HC/punk or whatever, so I try to think of interesting ways to talk about bands and records to get people amped on them. I always try to keep it as accessible and understandable to someone just getting into punk as it would be for someone who'd been into it for years.

MRR: How do you think a DIY, cut-and-paste zine is received in the age of the internet? Do you think the zine explosion in the '90s has carried over to keep the interest of older punks? Do you think younger punks are eager to get into it?
People that are really into punk and hardcore will like it in any format, so I think that anyone who digs hardcore and records and goes apeshit about it will care about a zine. But as a whole, I don't think people care about zines as much anymore. There are still a bunch of zines coming out, and in doing *Seven Inches to Freedom* I get to talk with a bunch of other people who put out zines, so a network is definitely still there. People that are really into it, stay into it. But I think since there aren't as a many zines as, say, in the '90s, it isn't a staple like it once was, so kids aren't as used to seeing someone with a shoebox full of zines sitting at a show, and they're not as acclimated to that as a part of DIY punk and hardcore. But I think zines will always have a place, because it's the embodiment of punk-it's a cheap, easy way to create something and to participate. And now since it's inconvenient and, more or less, obsolete, it's more punk than ever. Punk should go against the norm and operate outside of the boundaries. So they'll always have a place.



MRR: Do you think smaller DIY zines serve a purpose that a larger print zine does not?
Yeah, I think it's a totally different viewpoint; sometimes it's from a kid who lives in a small town who mail-orders a ton of records because there's no other outlet. There are not many other punks, and there are not a lot of shows. It's a less privileged, less jaded viewpoint. And a good, valid viewpoint. Small towns breed angry punks.

MRR: A lot of the ideas for zines, people say it's so much easier to put them on the internet, but bands will still go to the trouble of putting something in your hands like records or CDs... It seems like people are more likely to make a record than they are to make a zine, while it's as easy to put either on the internet.
Yeah, you're right, and I've heard a lot of talk about people switching to a blog or online zine, but I've never seen one. I've never read one or even come in contact with one. I've seen some blogs, but there's just nothing there, it's just words. Even if you could lay it out like a zine page with some graphics, text, pictures, I don't think it's meant for that. But for communication between punks, the internet rules and saves a lot of stamps, whether it's ordering zines, or making sure something is still in print. *But*, it also gives any yahoo the ability to email somebody saying "I'm in this band and I do all this stuff and I'm gonna send you



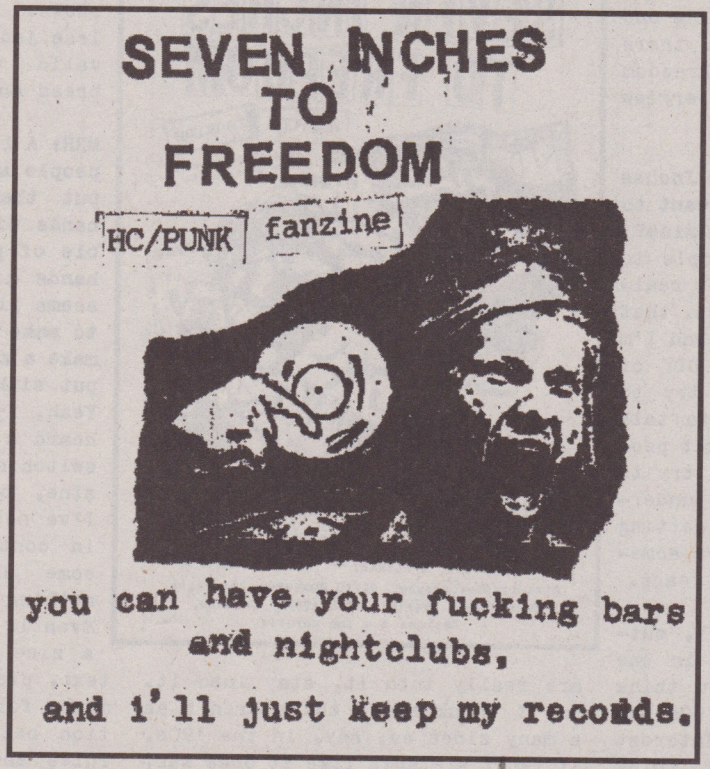
everything," and then they never follow through, because it's so immediate and easy. So, it's just like anything else-it has its good points and bad points. I would probably go broke sending out all the little notes I want to, like letters saying "Hey, I got your package, thanks a lot." That's a lot more cost-effective on the internet. So, I don't necessarily think the internet is a bad thing, but of course there's a bunch of jerks who use it wrong.

MRR: In the zine in general, there's an amped-on-music-and-records theme that shines through and is great at showing why records are classic and/or overlooked. Over the years in punk, though, there's become this record-collecting hysteria where somebody will pay so much fucking money for the Chain Of Strength LP, and it was just never meant to be that way. There's a capital-fuelled, rock star idolization in punk music these days. Bands that specifically wrote on the cover, "Pay no more than three dollars ever" now sell on eBay for so much more. Where is the line between being really into hardcore and records and being a collector jerkoff?

I like collecting records that I'm into, not some bullshit that is going to sell for a lot of money, or that when someone comes over and looks at my collection is going to go, "Oh, you got that? You're so fucking cool." I'm glad you brought this up, because I think there was a dude who took a swipe at me in his zine, saying "this zine is not about record collecting." And my zine isn't either, it's about records that I'm apeshit about, that I just really like. And that line between can be pretty obscure, I think, a lot of times. But in my zine I don't focus on colored vinyl, or the special pressing, or any of that bullshit. It's just like, "This record rules, it delivers musically, the ideas are good, that's awesome." Just because it's about records, doesn't mean it's about record collecting. And that's the format punk comes across on-records and tapes-it just goes hand in hand.

MRR: Sometimes in the zine, you allude to reasons why some things aren't as hyped-up as they should be, whereas other things are. A lot of people, not just in your zine, blame trends, bandwagons, style, and image for those weaknesses in hardcore. There're also hints of hierarchies and channels and doing things a certain way to get to a certain point. What is damaging about any of that, and what is holding good bands back?

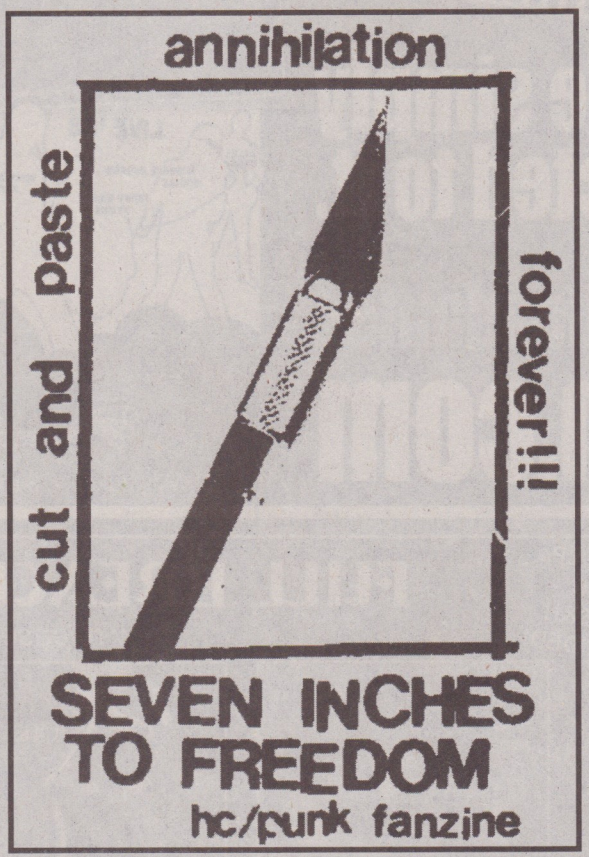
There is definitely a hierarchy among bands and people. I've mentioned this not just in the zine, but in conversations too. I really think hardcore/punk is set up similar to a sports team, where there are first and second strings. There are the bigger bands, the "stars of the team," who remain DIY, but play bigger shows, have bigger draws and have records that will sell a thousand copies easy, and might get special privileges because of who they are. Then there's the second string that wants to do the same thing, and might get asked to open for some first-string band at a show, but just aren't as revered. Some of these bands are totally legit, but some might do a few shady things; their ethics might not be as good, or they might not treat people as nicely. Then there's even a third string, bands that are real genuine, and will play a big show, but if there's something fucked up about it, they won't do it. And they will have to work a little harder for the same respect that the bigger bands get automatically. There are bands like Fucked Up that will come out with a new record that people are going to love it before they hear it. And yeah, some are going to hate it too. But certain records will be widely accepted because the band is so hyped or big, and sometimes, so good. But a lot of times, they suck, but they will still sell, just because of how things are set up. I think that's unavoidable, with how people are, and how society is. It works the other way too, though. Someone who has been around for years, working hard, doing good things, will get badmouthed just because they've made a name for themselves. When people reach some larger status in this scene, people want to shit-talk them. That sucks, because who do you believe? It could be just some dickhead looking for an excuse, or a friend that heard some gossip. So there is always going to be hype and hierarchies and jealousy, because not everybody that gets into punk has the same mindset. Punk is not that much different from society; I wish it was, and ideally it should be. So we just try to deal with it accordingly.



MRR: In your last issue, in your column in particular, there was a lot of talk about bad attitudes coming from voices in the scene. Why are there no middle-ground voices between the assholes who have the totally wrong idea about punk and espouse total bullshit, and the people who have the right idea but are too jaded to do anything about it? Why is it unacceptable to be excited about punk?

Shit man, "The squeaky wheel gets greased." There is a shit-ton of people that are in the middle ground, but you don't hear them. There are more people that want to sound jaded and want to sound too cool for everything and it's a bummer-we don't need that at all. I wouldn't do the zine if I didn't like the stuff I was covering. It's a lot of work, but I don't mind any of it because I like it. I just don't understand people that put all this effort into bands, zines,

columns,, etc… Why would you sit down every month and talk shit and complain? Just get the fuck out of here already! There are plenty of things in hardcore to be disputed or scoffed at, or disappointed with. I get disappointed with punks just as much as normal people. I've been burned out on punk before, so I know there are ups and downs, but come on! Some people have created some fucking miserable persona and thus created a name for themselves. But really, why are these people sticking around? Fortune? Fame? Fear of failure in the real music world? But there are people that are amped on something anywhere, and they should be, because shit rules, and I wish punks would focus on those people more. As far as enthusiasm, if you're like, "Oh, I was totally destroyed by this record, as soon as I dropped the needle it blew my mind," you're vulnerable to some dickhead saying, "Well, I think that record blows," and people are afraid of that vulnerability. Jaded people don't create a good influence, they don't remember what it was like when they found this different way of life, they don't remember what punk meant to them. They remember all the message-boards, and the Viva La Vinyls, whatever the fuck that shit is, they remember all of that and lose sight of what it's all about. Because punks are going to get old, and move on and die or whatever, and new kids gotta get amped on it. And they don't show these kids why they should.



MRR: It seems that a lot of the people that are jaded have problems with something but they don't call it out. They don't attack it, they just talk about it like they accept it, and they accept that everything's lame, and they don't do anything about it.
Yeah, I think that comes off in a real passive, bratty way. Like Charles Bronson lyrics. It doesn't help. They point stuff out, it's really funny, and really true, but it does more harm than good. It's shit-talking, it's stating your point in a really cowardly way. There's plenty of things I think suck, but I'd hate to be accused of doing it in such a weiner-ish way. I think that's another thing wrong with hardcore and punk, how it's gotten easy. People aren't held accountable. You have a stance, or, in some cases, you don't have a stance and want to create waves, so you shit-talk somebody and then when somebody calls you on it, you apologize. Like that classic Bill Florio thing where he stinkbombed Against Me. They deserved it, and he did the right thing, but when one of his friends called him on it, he apologized. That's lame. People can read between the lines, and when somebody does something shady, like Fucked Up signed to whatever fuckface label and people don't call it out because it's like, "oh, Fucked Up might come to my town and then I'd become friends with them and be in their thanks list." That sucks.

MRR: So it's like punk has become such a social arena now that punks are afraid of acting like punks?
[laughs] Yeah, I really do think that. There's a certain fascism there. People don't want to step on anyone's toes. There is that obnoxious punk that's a dickhead and says whatever he wants to for attention and I hate that, but I really hate the spineless, back-peddling liberal punk too. Shit, you are right, punks are afraid of acting like punks. I can't say I totally blame them, because sometimes if someone calls someone out, it gets blown out of proportion, and then that person is tagged as a rabble-rouser or a troublemaker or god-forbid, "PC"! But certain things need to be called out, and punks need to have viewpoints and take a stand on something and then hold true to that viewpoint when they're called on it. Shit-talk all you want, but when someone says "hey, you're wrong," say, "you know what, I'm not wrong." And if you are wrong, admit it and move on. But if you say something in print or online or behind someone's back, you have to back it up. And that's not being punk, that's just being a good person.

MRR: Where do you see the zine going next? What do you want to do with it?
I like how it is. It takes a good chunk of time, about six months for an issue. It's a little hard at times, but always rewarding. It's big enough that I have a bunch of good pen pals and made a bunch of friends from it, but it's small enough where it's not too much to handle. Even publishing it quarterly would probably be too much for me now. I like where it's at; I definitely think the later issues have better content… Hopefully that trend will continue! As long as I have interesting ways to write about records, and as long as I'm excited about them, then the zine will continue. I've thought about printing it professionally, but it's a free zine and I want to keep it that way because I don't feel right charging for it and I don't think as many people will get it if I do. Plus, I can scam copies, but I can't scam actual printing. I like the format. I don't think much will change. Hopefully, it will continue to look good and read real good, ha ha.

MRR: Anything else to add?
Thanks, John, for the interview. If you want to, send me a buck postage for a zine ($2 outside of the US). Don't be too cool for punk. If you're too cool, move on. We don't want you around, because hardcore rules. Up the punks.

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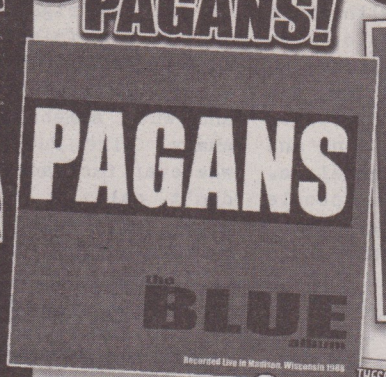

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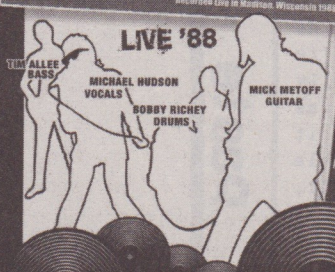

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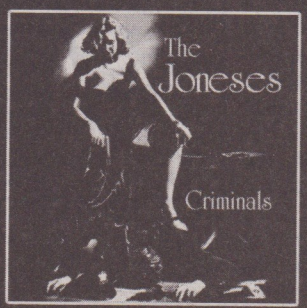

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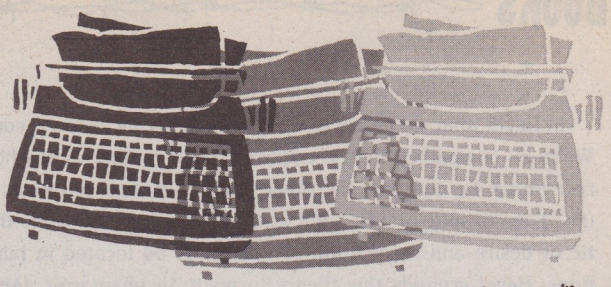
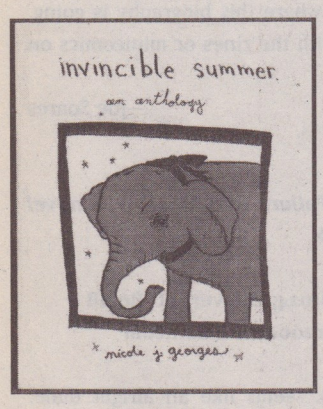




Invincible Summer: An Anthology
Nicole J. Georges
Microcosm Publishing
192 pages • $16
222 S. Rogers Street
Bloomington, IN 47404

Invincible Summer is a fanzine that Nicole Georges started in 2001, and this book compiles the first 8 issues plus a few extras, including a great calendar made up of a series of hand-drawn animals. The reprinted fanzines are chock full of illustrated journal entries, odes to caffeine addiction, and celebrates half a dozen other creative ways to live a life of DIY in today's western society. Georges discusses her relationships, putting on breakfast shows, bicycling, heartbreak, pets, and hanging out on punk house porches. Throw in some vegan recipes, bisexuality, and indie-rock house parties, and that's the book.

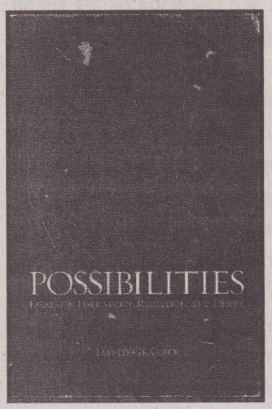
If I were a teenage girl just getting into the DIY scene, I would love this fanzine & probably memorize every page of this collection. Since I am not a teenage girl and have lived through the riot grrrl movement of the early-'90s, none of this is new. I understand and encourage the inspiration and energy that practically leaps from every page, but very little of this interests me, or most readers of *MRR*.

Georges' illustrations are the main attraction, even though she veers far into 'way too cutesy' when she's illustrating her personal life. Her artistic talent is wasted on cartooning. Artists who excel in the cartoon form—like Janelle Blarg—can make the personal diary leap off the page effortlessly. Unfortunately, Georges is no Janelle. I would be really interested in a series of her animal drawings or in a collection of her paintings. Georges has a flair for illustration that could go a lot further than even the very promising calendar images mentioned above.

Her writing style reads like a diary, which is not surprising since that's essentially what this is. Chock full of in-jokes and the minutia of vegan bike punk life, there's not much of interest for anyone who either wasn't there when the in-jokes happened or who is familiar with the general lifestyle.

When a "personal zine"—which this definitely qualifies as—is thrust into the public eye, we the readers have to ask "why?" What makes this collection of drawings & writing worth our time? To be blunt, most aren't worth our time unless we can directly relate to the place or the person being described. Occasionally, the writing or the art rises above these two criteria—see *Cometbus* as a perfect example. *Invincible Summer* is not worth our time unless we're just discovering the DIY lifestyle or are one of her roommates in the bike punk scene of Portland, OR.

—Jesse Luscious



Possibilities: Essays on Hierarchy, Rebellion, and Desire
David Graeber
420 pgs • $22.95
AK Press
674A 23rd Street
Oakland, CA 94612
www.akpress.org

While many intellectuals within the field of anthropology have adopted a new lexicon for their writing, one almost exclusively derived from continental theory, David Graeber attempts to resuscitate modes of theorizing long jettisoned by many academics for their Imperialistic overtones. He returns to 19th and early-20th century anthropology, where the subjectivity of the author was perceived to be more stable in its boundaries, and generally free from the pitfalls of Eurocentric narcissism. Where many only see dated ethnographical writings abandoned for their Eurocentric tendencies, Graeber sees some concepts that "are in no sense projections of existing Euro-American categories on other cultures." It is in large part this open-mindedness that makes Graeber's *Possibilities* an enjoyably compelling read. His research is expansive and his writing is distinguishable in its accessibility.

Though the title of Graeber's book contains the academic buzzword "desire," don't expect any postmodernist trumping or reworking of Hegelian dialectics. And don't expect the style of anthropologists like Michael Taussig or other more mercurial academic writers. While not without references to Continental philosophy (i.e. Giorgio Agamben, Georges Bataille, Cornelius Castoriadis), Graeber's brand of anthropology is not lost in 'theory.' He remains grounded through constant reference to history and ethnography (a whole section of the book deals with his fieldwork in Madagascar). His explication of complex ideas and their relation to one another is rich while easy to understand.

In "The Very Idea of Consumption," Graeber turns conventional understandings of desire in cultural theory on their head. Since the advent of post-structuralist theory in North American academia, there seems to be this logic that while consumption of commodities allows for the construction of social identities, it simultaneously reinforces capitalism's domination over our lives, and that this process of identity-formation results in an inescapable impasse. Graeber identifies two ways of accounting for this bleak and "reactionary" picture. One is our apparently warped understanding of desire, as inherited from the aforementioned philosopher, Hegel. The other is our understanding of how this Hegelian conceptualization of desire serves as the basis for an ideology of consumption. (Although my writing may make no sense to you, Graeber does an amazing job at making these ideas interesting and understandable.) I'm going to try to explain this a little further...

In Hegel what we desire is recognition and this desire is competitive. We're all competing to be recognized by each other. And when we are recognized we consume the other person. My ego consumes your ego (i.e. 'I' am in spite of 'you'). But as Graeber points out, while this dialectic of desire and recognition can certainly be located in human relations, Hegel grounds this theory in myth, in phantasms. (Actually, he stages it between "40 year-old males" fighting to the death to be recognized by each other.) In any event, this understanding of consumption becomes abstracted and grossly generalized. We (aspiring or lay social scientists) consequently begin to think of consumption as occurring in every facet of life, from eating to watching TV to forming a band. The problem Graeber sees in this is that consumption then gets confused with production, and rather than production being positive—in that it involves the formation of human relationships (i.e. forming a band)—it takes on a wholly negative meaning. In other words, the production of social identities gets confused with the consumption that turns human people into nothing more than a studded vest. We are caught in the endless double-bind of capitalism rather than producing ourselves as "persons, internalized nexuses of human relations."

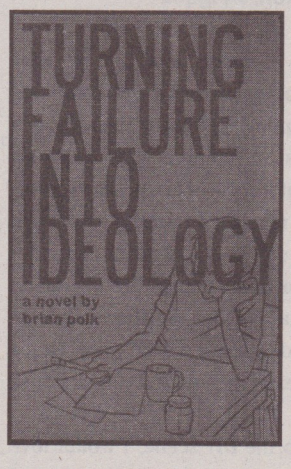
This last point reflects Graeber's refreshingly optimistic disposition. While not so naive to offer half-baked solutions for defeating the admitted juggernaut of modern-day capitalism, Graeber does make suggestions oriented toward effecting change. One suggestion is "to treat consumption not as an analytical term but as an ideology to be investigated," an ideology which self-professed neo-liberals and radicals are essential to perpetuating. In general, he suggests clarifying or even redefining the terminology our bleeding hearts attach too: consumption, revolution, fetishism, oppression, and the "West." Graeber reminds us that "rebellions do occur, almost everywhere," and that "it would be clearly wrong to conclude, as some do, that hierarchy is an immutable, all-encompassing system that will always be able to absorb any challenge thrown at it." This book rules.

—Dan Butler

Reich #1
Elijah Brubaker
24 pgs • $3.00
Sparkplug Comics
PO Box 10952
Portland, OR 97296
www.sparkplugcomics.com

Here is a little DIY comic that professes to be a biography of one Wilhem Reich. I honestly had never heard of him until now, and this first chapter has me intrigued to learn more. It begins by humanizing him, showing him leaving the army in Italy at the end of World War One, before getting into the documented history he had at the Vienna University. Here he challenged the views of human sexuality that were being reinforced through the medical courses that existed at the time. He actually commandeers the class, and steers the curriculum to where he felt it should be going. There are interesting asides with his personal life, as well as meeting Freud before an abrupt cliffhanger hits on the last page. The inside back cover details the research that went into this with footnotes, as well as notations of places where there were not solid sources of information available which led to using hearsay of peers at the time. The writing is pretty sharp, and the art looks good in that indie cartoonist way that you are probably well accustomed to by now. Reich seems to be an interesting historical figure and I like the looks of where this biography is going. Definitely one to pick up if you see it with the zines or minicomics on your store shelf.

—Joe Soares



Turning Failure Into Ideology: a novel
Brian Polk
$13
PO Box 181024, Denver, CO 80218
eliminator2000@hotmail.com

Brian Polk seems like an alright dude. The book's printed on 100% recycled post-consumer paper. He's trying to do the right thing, and he went ahead and completed a novel. Eli Indignant, the protagonist, probably isn't so different. He describes himself thusly: "I'm not talented as a writer, but I don't have a problem publishing my own writing—given that no one else is willing to do it. Someone like me shouldn't be working in an office. I should be working in a record store."

But in the book, as in real-life, the hero is working in an office. There's also the usual suspects in the setting—whiskey, "Baby I'm an Anarchist," rednecks wanting to fight, American Steel, and financial problems. On page 114, he laments: "there's a lot of pressure to eat that shit sandwich." The quarter-life crisis is not an inherently interesting subject though. Just as most readers of this magazine probably understand what they're getting into when they deal with the straight world of square jobs.

So is this a book for his peers or his normative relatives? Lines like "conservatives like dad don't understand that anti-capitalist art chicks with tattoos are totally hot" make me wonder. The typesetting doesn't make it any easier—no spacing between paragraphs, and the wide margins make the text feel cramped. Sure, DIY can mean reinventing certain things, but why make it rough for your readers?

Turning Failure Into Ideology is a quick read. Not a crucial one, but from one library worker to another, here's hoping that it was a good experience for you, Brian.

—Travis Fristoe

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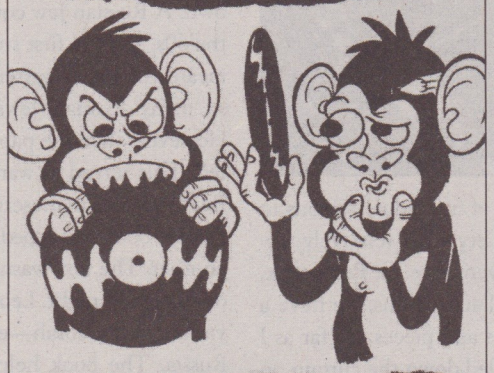

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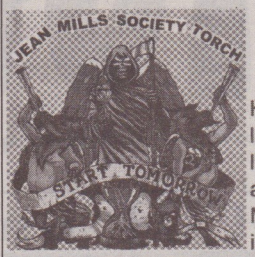

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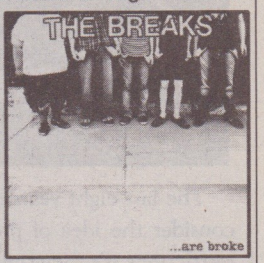

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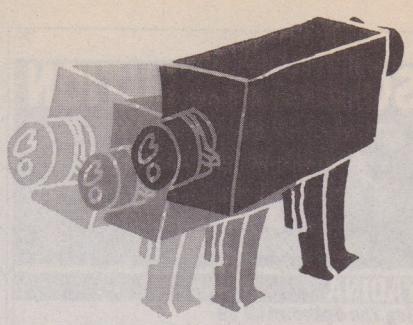


FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI

The last eight years has offered any number of individual reasons to consider the idea of protest, but in a free society with relatively few restrictions it's sometimes considered an inconvenience. In **Refusenik**, a new documentary produced and directed by Laura Bealis, we have a story that has been related often—albeit in bits and pieces. So far as I know, this is the first time a feature film has pulled down the curtain on an era of protest that's so much a part of history. It's the era of the "refusenik," a term that's embarrassingly awkward, and accurate. At the same time, it's the story of the rise and fall of the Iron Curtain, and everything that came along with it

It's no secret that Jews have been the continued focus of discrimination, and in any number of countries. Russia is another matter altogether—the mother of the catch-22 (and maybe the way to break that "catch.") In the first two decades of the last century, Russian Jews were often isolated from other parts of society—a manifestation of a centuries-old issue that had never been addressed under imperial rule. But with the revolution, all the old problems were suddenly magnified.

As Bealis summarizes, Jews were the victims of an infamous policy, which the rise of Stalin only made worse. On one hand, it's clear that they were an unwanted quantity in much of Russian society. The logical response, then, would be to let them go. But then, we'd be guilty of modern thinking; the mass exodus of hundreds of thousands of people would cripple the Russian labor force, which depended on these laborers. Moreover, there was the more pragmatic problem: once they were freed, where would they go next? Under the Stalinist system, at least Russia had control.

A world war only served to expand the problem. News of the Nazi prison camps and all that came with it was mirrored by Stalinist society. Crushing restrictions were felt by nearly all Russian society, Jews or not. But the application for an exit visa was, at least in the '40s and '50s, an invitation to prison camps, and in the Gulag, people sometimes simply vanished. **Refusenik** has its roots in this climate, in a world chilled by the Cold War. And although the film tries to concentrate on the success stories, few people were able to buck the Soviet system. The most infamous were the dissidents sentenced to mental hospitals. This was the equivalent of a life sentence under punishing drug regimens. In one interview, a victim recalls feeling himself torn apart inside by the drugs.

Refusenik is a project that contains an abundance of unique material, but this doesn't necessarily mean that it *feels* unique. Old silent films and equally dated photographs serve as the visual fabric for the film. The breadth of this new material can be exhaustive , but ultimately, it's founded in events that are very much part of the public record.

That's where the "catch-22" element of the film takes on a life of its own. A Russian Jew could apply for an exit visa in the '40s and through the'60s. But the first step was to renounce Russian citizenship, and that meant you had to surrender your job. (The film makes a dry joke on how so many Russian Jews during this period were elevator operators.) However, once the paperwork had been filed, visas still weren't permitted. This served as warning to other Jews to stay in the Soviet system. But in 1958, a manuscript made its way through the Soviet Jewish world.

The book was typed out, and often passed from one Jewish reader to another. The text wasn't complete, and most readers tried to finish it in one sleepless night. Leon Uris' *Exodus* emerged almost like a modern-day variant of the Torah—except that religion, too, was forbidden in Stalin's Russia. The book helped cement a newfound Jewish identity, which spurred a fascination with Jewish language and culture. Refusenik is particularly successful in capturing the excitement of the era. Groups of Jews would gather in sub-alpine climes (where the KGB lost their interest), and the independence movement took hold for a few brave men.

A number of Russian Jews were sentenced to the Gulag, a painfully cold area of Russia where physical survival was the priority. In one case that captured the headlines, a few Jewish men hijacked a plane with the hope of disembarking somewhere in Eastern Europe. (The attempt failed, but the international outcry was so intense that the expected death sentences were commuted to shorter terms.)

Then, a few Americans began to contact members of a sophisticated network of Soviet Jews. Finding a way to slip away from their tourist buses, there now was a way to send messages globally.

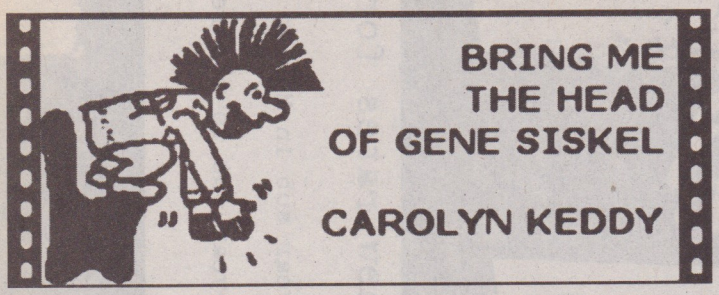
Refusenik's message of victory is muddled by its brief, poorly nuanced treatment of Israel's Six Day War. As the film unfolds, there's a tendency to replace reportage with partisan statements. But international politics starts to play an expanded role in shaping the future of dissident Soviet Jews. Director Bealis claims that the turning point occurred with the international acceptance of the Helsinki Accord, which codified human rights issues. Russia, one of the signers, soon found that they might be found guilty of violating an accord they'd just agreed to. Carter and Reagan play important roles, and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev in particular (interviewed for the film), emerges as a diplomatic hero of sorts.

The film is almost a cookbook for social change. Cells were formed in various American cities for the liberation of specific men. The organizing units would be as small as a group of housewives sponsoring a release. In Russia, the idea that housewives and ordinary citizens would organize was as absurd as it was unprecedented. The Kremlin doesn't bend to outsiders. But at least in one famous case, that's exactly what happened.

It's one of the most touching sections of the documentary. What's to be done when a popular couple of famed dancers decide to withdraw from the Bolshoi, in hopes of leaving. Their expectations were, even by

the couple's admission, naïve. What eventually happens is almost miraculous.

Refusenik is a concentrated history lesson with enough happy endings to make for an overall pleasing film experience.



ASK HER IF SHE STILL KEEPS ALL HER KINGS IN THE BACK ROW

Why would anyone make a film about Mark David Chapman? He killed John Lennon, but does that senseless action deserve a film? The people behind **Chapter 27** think it does. The film focuses on Chapman's three days in New York before he murders Lennon.

Chapman arrives in New York with the sole purpose of getting Lennon's autograph then shooting him. The film follows the solitary Chapman as he stands on the street in front of the Dakota where Lennon lived with wife Yoko Ono and son Sean. He talks with other fans as well as doormen. On the street he seems like your average music fan. When he is alone, he is an obsessed killer who poses with his gun in the mirror. He meticulously plans his last days of freedom. He hires a hooker to come to his room. He calls his wife in Hawaii. He displays all of his belongings in his hotel room so the police and presumably the media will know who he is. All these scenes are slow and done in voice over. It drags and only makes you wonder over and over again, who would want to see this movie.

Actor Jared Leto gained 60 over-publicized pounds to play Chapman. As a result he looks eerily similar to the assassin. Since he chose to gain the weight instead of put on a fat suit, the director J.P. Schaefer spends too much time shooting Leto in his underwear. In one scene, Chapman is outside of the Dakota waiting for Lennon complaining how cold it is. He is from Hawaii so winter in New York is, one would assume, much colder. In the next scene he is in his room at the YMCA sleeping in his underwear with no blanket. I am sure the heating system at the Y isn't the best so why would he not be using a blanket? Also Leto seems completely uncomfortable in his new fat body. He has trouble taking off a shirt.

The attention drawn to his weight gain aside, Leto does an amazing job playing Chapman. He is so creepy and demented, yet pathetic. You wonder if things would have gone differently had one of the people he meets in New York actually befriended him. Yet, most people are understandably adverse to desperation. It is hard to tell if this guy is lonely or just crazy. As the time is drawing near to the murder, Chapman debates getting in a cab to leave. It is an emotional scene where you are routing for Chapman to give up his plan. Even though you already know what happens. That ending makes a bit of difference. You aren't cheering for Chapman to kill; you are cheering for Lennon to live. (www.chapter27themovie.com/ch27v2)

Two different documentaries that take a similar approach to explaining the origins of punk arrived this month. The first, **All Grown Up**, interviews more obscure punk musicians about their beginnings and current position in the punk scene. The most famous person in this film is TV Smith of The Adverts. Henry Rollins, Ian MacKaye, and Keith Morris are nowhere to be seen. Each person is asked for insight on punk, how it was when she/he became a punk, what her/his parents thought about it, and what each does for a day job. The latter is the most telling of the punk lifestyle. You may be in a band, but you still need to work. Punk usually doesn't pay the bills. Director Andrea Witting also makes a point to note that most punks aren't stupid. There are teachers and scientists in this group.

The idea of **All Grown Up** is that while some kids may get into punk for superficial reasons, those who truly get into it are in it for life. I'd be the first to tell you that is true. Just look at the entire *MRR* crew. While it is nice to be reassured, it does start to get pretty repetitive. Everyone has a similar story. This is a film you wish people outside the scene would watch and understand, but unfortunately you know they wouldn't be interested. (www.psykopunkproductions.com)

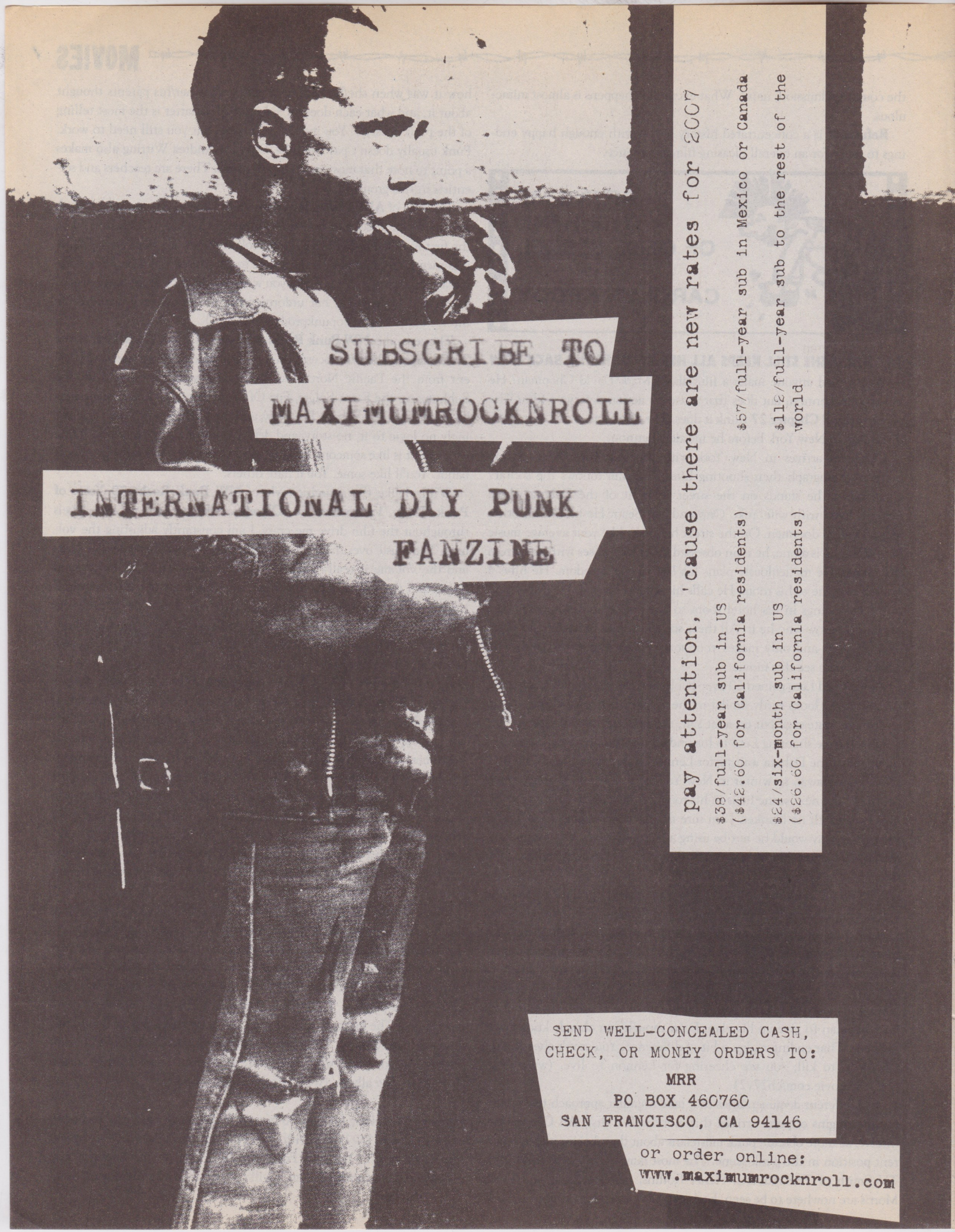
The second is **NW Punk Rock: 30 Years of Punk Rock Vancouver To Olympia**. The film focuses on a hodgepodge of bands past and present from the Pacific Northwest. Some you may have heard of: the Subhumans, the Fartz, Solger, Fitz Of Depression, RC5, and some may be unknown: the Slashers, Pot Belly, and the Rebel Spell. There is seemingly no logic to it, no story, and definitely no rock stars, which is fine with me. It is like someone making you a mixed tape of his favorite local bands. You'll like some. You'll hate others.

While I like the anarchic style of **NW Punk Rock: 30 Years of Punk Rock Vancouver To Olympia**, the uneven volume levels throughout the film drive me crazy. I am constantly adjusting the volume. The music over the opening credits is loud, but then the film starts and the volume is really low for the interviews. There is background noise, and the music clips that coincide with what the interviewee is talking about turn up and drown out their voice. Then inexplicably the interview with Kyle Nixon of Solger is really loud. All the sound inconsistencies need to be worked out for this film to be really enjoyed. (www.landofthedave.org)

The tragic story of Nick Drake is unfortunately not as interesting as his music. **Nick Drake Under Review** tells that story through his music and recollections of those who were there and some that weren't. Drake was an upper class English kid proficient at a few different musical instruments, but guitar was his main one. When he went off to college he discovered English folk scene. Ashley Hutchings of the Fairport Convention saw Drake performing at a coffeehouse benefit show. He was so impressed that he introduces Drake to producer Joe Boyd. Drake releases three albums that don't sell well. Poor sales combined with his stage fright and depression lead to his suicide at age twenty-six. Posthumously he receives the attention he should have got while he was alive.

Nick Drake Under Review is one of the first in this series not to heavily rely on music writers to comment on the artist. Instead, it takes the interesting approach of interviewing non-famous musicians who perform Drake's music. Even when it seems awkward to watch someone reproduce Drake's music at least these musicians are very familiar with what they're playing. They know the intricacies. Also interviewed are members of The Fairport Convention and Incredible String Band both of which played shows with Drake. The film also features Drake's friend, Jeremy Mason, about whom he wrote the song "Three Hours" on the *Five Leaves Left* album. (www.chromedreams.co.uk)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com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RECORDS

Send **two** copies of vinyl or CD-only releases (if on both formats, please send the *vinyl*) to **MRR, PO Box 460760, SF, CA 94146, USA**.
We will review everything that falls within our area of coverage: punk, garage, hardcore—no major labels or labels distributed by major-affiliated distros. Please include postpaid price and contact information. Let us know where your band is from! *No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork.*

Reviewers:
(AA) Ariel Awesome
(JU) Justin Briggs
(TB) Tim Brooks
(MC) Mitch Cardwell
(PC) Paul Curran
(AD) Andy Darling
(DD) Dr. Dante
(SD) Sean Dougan
(JF) Jonathan Floyd
(LG) Layla Gibbon
(BG) Bob Goldie
(MH) Mike Howes
(JH) Jaime Hoy
(CS) Chris Hubbard
(KK) Kenny Kaos
(CK) Carolyn Keddy
(RK) Ramsey Kanaan
(WK) Will Kinser
(PL) Phil Lantz
(AL) Andy Larsen
(RL) Ray Lujan
(P$) Paul Lucich
(MM) Marissa Magic
(NM) Nick Mangel
(AM) Allan McNaughton
(MU) Andrew Murphy
(JP) Jason Patrone
(BR) Bruce Roehrs
(KS) Ken Sanderson
(FS) Fred Schrunk
(CI) Cissie Scurlock
(MS) Martin Sorrondeguy
(SS) Steve Spinali

4 FT. FINGERS – "New Beginnings of Old Stories" CD

Awful band name and an album cover that looks like a knock-off of LARS FREDERIKSEN & THE BASTARDS...but hold on...the music contained herein is actually pretty good, if a bit manufactured sounding. Hailing from Cheltenham, 4 FT. FINGERS play an extremely poppy brand of "street-ish" punk. All the instruments are played with very solid technique and they come through clearly in the mix. At times the singer reminds me of a milder Olaf from Germany's STAGE BOTTLES. My favorite song was "Save Your Soul Tonight" with its very catchy chorus that sounded a bit like MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE mixed with a some MEN AT WORK but played by fans of punk (I know, it sounds terrible but isn't). There is one horribly anomalous track that sounded like the bastard child of the TOSSERS and DEXY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS. My only other complaint is that the album might be a bit over-produced with too much polish and too little bite. Judge for yourself. (RK)
(Not on Your Radio, www.notonyourradio.com)

26 BEERS – "27 Beers" CD

Twelve tracks of basically down-market speed metal from Boston. Screeched-out vocals with the impeccable, near-programmed delivery that usually walks in with heavy metal and baroque guitar noodling. Ironically, even though this kind of thrash metal used to show up on Wild Rags, Metal Blade, or whatever, it is more intense than most of that, and maybe in its severity and outlook more "cross back" than "cross over" as the lines blur even further. As *27 Beers* progresses, so does the music, which gains an even more metallic direction as well as prog leanings. Caustic vocals spit out as many lyrics about being booze-addled as they do against war, senseless violence, and life's frustrations. (KS)
(Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1134, Allston, MA 02134, www.rodentpopsicle.com)

ACCÜSED – "The Return of Martha Splatterhead" CD

Crashing, screeching punk speed metal of the most over-the-top, gore-obsessed variety. As much as it's pretty raging and entertaining, the demon-titties cover (you know the kind of art I'm talking about—gory hell-demon with inexplicably perfect tits) and the song about fucking "horny old sluts" for money is, like, so fucking boring. *Yaaaawwwwn*. I know, I know, it was recorded in the '80s, times were, like, totally different. Whatever. (AA)
(Unrest, www.unrestrecords.com)

AGATHOCLES / THE VANISHING ACT – split CD

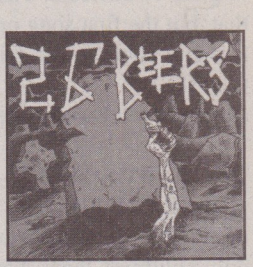
It's hard for me to get that butterflies-in-the-stomach feeling when I see a new AGATHOCLES release, not because I don't like them, but because they do exhaust me with their output. I will admit that if you're looking for full-bore raw grind, it's these Belgians you want. Mincecore indeed! AGATHOCLES has eleven tracks, and the VANISHING ACT has three originals and one IMPETIGO cover—which seems disproportionate as a split, but oh well. The VANISHING ACT plays grind mixed with death metal and sometimes ventures into a gore-grind sound. (NM)
(Sir Punkly, www.sirpunkly.com)

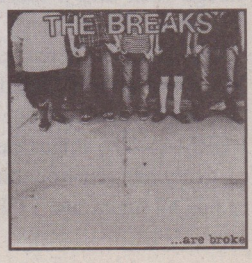
AMEBIX – "No Sanctuary" CD

Ah, AMEBIX, how I curse thee for spawning a million dirge-y metallic crust bands. I am a *huge* early fan of their early stuff, and yes, one of two band tattoos I have is AMEBIX (my parents are so proud). The band got a little lost, but their seminal LP *Arise* is the benchmark of the genre, bringing the politicized CRASS style of punk together with the metallic dirge of VENOM and SABBATH. What we have here is a collection of their impossible-to-find early EPs—my fave recordings by the band. The anarcho influence is much stronger than their later releases, having as much in common with FLUX OF PINK INDIANS as any metal band. Of the three EPs here—*No Sanctuary*, *Winter*, and *Who's the Enemy*—it's hard to pick a favorite, but "No Gods No Masters" has a special place in my heart. Essential for anyone who doesn't own the records. (TB)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA www.alternativetentacles.com)

THE AMISTAD / ORPHAN CHOIR – split EP

Didn't care for this record that much. It totally seems like something that would have come out on Salinas,





though. The cover has one of those pictures of people faces like THE MEASURE [SA] always have on their albums. Actually, the ORPHAN CHOIR sounds kind of like THE MEASURE [SA] if they had super gruff male vocals, way more distortion, and a guy from SMALL BROWN BIKE filling in on second guitar. I think about this record in the same way as I think about the WHISKEY TRENCH 7". It's totally something I would have liked a year or two ago, but since this kind of sound blew up a little while back, there's a crap-load of bands playing the style. Now that the national scene is oversaturated with this type of OFF WITH THEIR HEADS-influenced punk, bands kind of need to do something original or different. This record does not do that, but the first song on the AMISTAD side is pretty cool—it has this RIVETHEAD feel to it. (FS)
(Records Or It Didn't Happen, www.roidh.co.uk)

THE BABY SHAKES – "Tell Me Now" EP

The BABY SHAKES are one of a handful of my absolute favorite bands and this release only solidifies their standing. This one is a heart-shaped 7" on red vinyl. (Didn't the HUMPERS do that years ago?) At any rate, all three tracks are solid female-led power pop rockers. Find this one. (KK)
(Rob's House, www.robshouserecords.com)

JASON BENNETT & THE RESISTANCE – "Hope Dies Last" CD

JASON BENNETT & THE RESISTANCE has produced a nice little five-song EP of catchy mid-tempo punk tunes. This shows hints of melodic street punk (STREET DOGS, THE NEW BREED, RANCID), early punk via the CLASH (no surprise there), and maybe a grain of Al Barr and the BRUISERS thrown in somewhere. Good lyrics about modern life in the USA. "Open Letter to an Arrogant Politician" and the title track are both very strong. Keep an eye on JASON BENNETT & THE RESISTANCE as they develop. Good stuff here. (RK)
(Teenage Heart, www.teenageheart.com)

THE BLACK AND WHITES – LP

Fun, catchy tunes in the early new-wave style—stuck somewhere between classic garage rock and a more modern (for 1980) approach. It's the lo-fi version of the first CARS album. There are some rockin' tunes and some slower ballads. There's even one fast, almost hardcore one (think MISSION OF BURMA). The singer has a nasally voice, but in a very pleasant-sounding way. I could listen to this all night, and I think I will. It's a good thing this is my last review to do this month... (CK)
(Douchemaster, 297 Atlanta Ave SE #5, Atlanta GA 30315)

BLACK FLAG – "Keith Morris 1978, Henry Rollins 1982 Demos" LP

Ron Reyes and Dez Cadena certainly left their marks, but this set of demos concentrates on BLACK FLAG's two most popular lead singers, and offers a focused set of tracks. The Keith Morris tracks are more primitive with a guitar flavor that veers on a live-in-studio sound achieving varied results, even with chestnuts. Conversely, on the Henry Rollins tracks, BLACK FLAG emerges into a more individual sound. "Slip It In" and especially "My War" are anthemia, chunky, at times rock-ish, but offer the most memorable moments on the record. Although at times uneven, this gives an extraordinary sense of the band's development, and the development of punk with hardcore. Crucial for fans, and fascinating to boot. (SS)
(bootleg)

BLACK FLAG – "Welcome Home Henry" LP

Some time after Thor created Thunder with his Mighty Hammer and the Pilgrims turned it into a delicious turkey feast, lore has it that the mighty FLAG created a great and powerful sound with his bare hands. This bootleg LP manages to harness a shitty sound, a homecoming crowd, and *celebrity* DC backing vocals. It's FLAG in '81. If you like *shitty bootlegs*, here's one for the collection. (LG)
(bootleg)

BLACKJACKET – "Citizens Epidemic" CD

Fast and melodic hardcore from Canada, similar to likes of VERSE and STRIKE ANYWHERE. A couple of things I think this record could have done without were the emo acoustic guitar intro and the gratuitous use of violin in one song. Overall, this is some pretty solid modern hardcore with an intact political consciousness. (PL)
(Blackjacket, 353 Trailridge Cres, Oshawa, ON, L1K 1Y5, CANADA, blackjacket-mail@yahoo.com)

BLANK ITS – "Stop! No! Wait!" EP

Yay! I love BLANK ITS. They are one of the most fun bands around and I am so happy to have a new record from them. Simplistic garage-y and punk-y rock with almost robotic vocals. It's all very English post-punk circa 1979, yet with a decidedly less-pretentious flare. Or, maybe it's just me. The first song on side two, "Stretch Pull Stretch," is amazingly catchy with a nicely shouted ending: "I quit! I don't wanna work for you!" Yeah! (CK)
(Band Its, no address)

BRAINWORMS / DYNAMITE ARROWS – split EP

DYNAMITE ARROWS plays a familiar brand of 40oz basement-show sing-along pop-punk, while BRAINWORMS takes an angular, off-kilter approach more akin to '90s post-hardcore. Two songs from each band wrapped in a pretty color sleeve featuring Abraham Lincoln blowing a bubble. (AM)
(Rorschach, www.rorschachrecords.net)

THE BREAKS – "...Are Broke" EP

Five unreleased songs from this cool early-'80s-influenced hardcore band that was around a couple of years ago. Some members wound up in CARDIAC ARREST and CIVIC PROGRESS, which helps me out 'cause I would say this falls between those two sounds a bit. Their only EP, *Get Saved*, was a pretty goddamn fine record that got slightly lost in the slew of US hardcore revival bands that were flooding the bins circa 2005. That's regrettable since they really weren't a retro band at all, but a contemporary band that played traditional hardcore the way it supposed to be played—fast, raw, and cynical. The five tracks on this one-sided disc were recorded during the same session as their other EP, but I guess they had to cut out a few for space reasons. The lyrics are great, which is always important to me. This might not be the most essential release of the year, but definitely recommended for fanatics like myself who dig straight-up hardcore. (BG)
(Firestarter, 2981 Falls Rd, Baltimore, MD 21211, www.firestarterrecords.com)

BRIMSTONE HOWL – "Tunnel of Love/Child of Perdition"

Two new tracks from this cool Nebraskan rock 'n' roll/punk band. I've seen comparisons to old BLUES EXPLOSION, which might be felt to some degree with the blues-y vocals and twang-y guitar, but they also have a gloomy garage element that makes the band sound to me more like a mix of NEW WAVE HOOKERS, early STROKES, and maybe a bit of MODERN LOVERS. "Tunnel of Love" features some nice guitar licks that would make Keith Richards smile, and the flipside is a foot-tappin', mid-paced rocker that should serve as a good introduction to anyone unfamiliar with these boys. Check 'em out. (BG)
(Boom Chick, www.boomchickrecords.com)

BROADWAY CALLS – "Oregon" CD

Sugary-sweet pop punk. This is way too twee and emo-tional. It sounds like that last WESTON album that sucked. I don't like it...it lacks something...maybe pubes? (AD)
(Adeline, no address)

BRUISE VIOLET – "NOLA" EP

BRUISE VIOLET is an all-female Los Angeles hardcore band; this EP is on a Polish record label that focuses on releasing female punk bands. I really dig this 7". The songs are anthems dealing with violence against women, youth taking on and changing the world, working, and a few other topics. BRUISE VIOLET reminds me a little of a heavier HARUM SCARUM with two different vocal sounds—gruff and clean. Now I want to see this band live! I've listened to this over and over. (MH)
(Emancypunx, www.emancyunx.com)

CAPITAN ENTRESIJOS – "Furia Chicharra" LP

Whoa. Some bizarro post-punk rock 'n' roll from Spain that verges on chaos at every turn. Nice dirty guitar, great vocals, addictive riffs, and a fucking saxophone. BAD POSTURE meets X-RAY SPEX? If you like your punk catchy, dirty, and like nothing else, check this shit out. (AA)
(Big Black Hole, www.bigblackholerecords.tk)

CAREER SOLDIERS – "Loss of Words" LP

Punk Core Records brings you another hardcore record played by some spiky-haired chaos punks, and sounds similar to bands such as MONSTER SQUAD and the UNSEEN. The production is a bit lavish for a punk album, I feel. Are you trying to be the EXPLOITED or METALLICA? Pretty much sounds the same as the rest of the bands from this scene: easily forgettable. (PL)
(Punk Core, PO Box 916, Middle Island, NY 11953)

CHEAP TIME – CD

I have a couple of CHEAP TIME singles. I like them, but I wouldn't actually find myself rushing home to listen to any of them. Yet, something fantastic has happened en route to this album. The songwriting, music, and performance have coalesced perfectly. This is one of the best albums I have heard in a long time. Catchy pop songs that aren't too wimpy. Distortion is employed, but not to simply cover up the whole production. It makes the songs sound harsh, but in a truly interesting way. My two immediate favorite songs are "People Talk" and "Over Again," with more to come as I keep on listening to this great record. (CK)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, www.intheredrecords.com)

CHEVEU – "My Answer Is Yes/Lola Langusta"

Beloved French trio, CHEVEU, is adored for a reason. They make smart music, have a sense of humor, and seem to have a grasp on musical styles that work well within what they're doing. All of those points are laid out nicely on this single from Rob's House. The "My Answer Is Yes" side to the weird, echo-y, sexy (like a garter belt, or *Specs Appeal*, but not like the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue) tune. The A-side is the weirdness needed to complete a CHEVEU single, with the vocals echoed and mind meltingly affected. The feeling is so dim and dark that you can barely pull yourself up out of it to flip it. The B-side, "Lola Langusta", is the down-home Frenchy answer to the mysteriousness of the A-side. It's the twang-y and fun sing-along-if-you-dare with a dark sense of humor. So good, you want to know if one of them had to make some sort of pact with an evil being so this single could be in existence. (AL)
(Rob's House, www.robshouserecords.com)

WILD BILLY CHILDISH & THE BLACKHANDS – "Who Do You Think You're Kidding Mr. Hitler?" EP

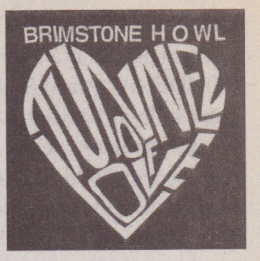
Does anyone still give a fuck about BILLY CHILDISH? He's kind of become the Jello Biafra of garage music. I keep forgetting about him until he emerges to make some embarrassing uncontroversial statement about CDs being lame or the White Stripes sucking or to put out some more lo-fi dad rock. Then there's that iPod of all his songs you can buy for like 3,000 pounds…how fucking anti! So yeah, it's unbelievable that the same mind who spat out such bile-treasure as "It's Bad" and "Every Bit of Me" can release this goofy shit. (JP)
(Damaged Goods, www.damagedgoods.com)

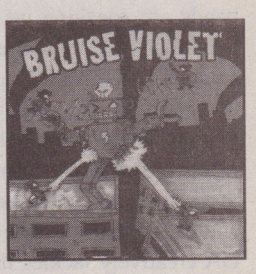
CITY SCUM – "Dead Man" EP

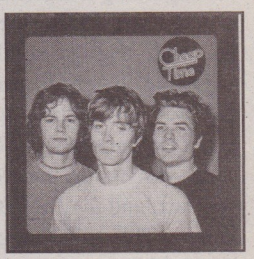
It came as no surprise to learn that these guys are from SoCal. Judging from the front and back cover, I didn't think I was going to like this record that much, but it's actually really good. Total throwback to GERMS and STOOGES played by (what I can only imagine are) LA dirtbags. The band name couldn't describe this band any better. Good EP. (FS)
(Rich Bitch, PO Box 1402, Tempe, AZ 85280, www.richbitchrecords.com)

CLOAK/DAGGER – "Kamikazes/She Cracked"

"Kamikazes" is the single from Richmond, VA's CLOAK/DAGGER's full-length *We Are* CD (Jade Tree) and LP (Grave Mistake). It's HOT SNAKES worship, but not a blatant rip-off. It's not offensive in the slightest. Actually it's quite listenable, and really, to be perfectly honest, it's enjoyable, I guess. There is, however, nothing special heard here, and not only is it nothing special, there seems to be a lot missing. There is no edginess in the mix—it's completely accessible. The B-side is an unreleased cover of the MODERN LOVERS' song "She Cracked," and while, once again, it fits in nicely with the overall package of the band/release, it is not ground-breaking. Overall, CLOAK/DAGGER seems like they are one of those bands that a lot of people probably get into, and if a person is going to like them, they probably already do. Meh. (AL)
(Grave Mistake, PO Box 12482, Richmond, VA 23241, www.gravemistakerecords.com)







RECORDS

CONDENADA / SIN ORDEN – split EP

This split EP is a long time in the making—CONDENADA and SIN ORDEN have shared punk bills in Chicago's basements and warehouses for many years, and these songs were recorded in 2006. Aside from inhabiting the same city, both bands compliment each other with similarly politically charged lyrics and graphics. While it is beyond passé to care about "issues" in the current punk scene, these bands are speaking up about complex problems that genuinely affect their lives. On this split, CONDENADA plays three songs of inventive, thoughtful, and catchy punk of varying tempos and rhythms. Mariam, the frontwoman, has a strong voice and mixes her vocal patterns to include shouting, talking, and occasionally a little singing. CONDENADA creatively tackles the topics of war, jock attitudes in punk, and the false lure of big city life regarding indigenous folks. SIN ORDEN is more straight-for-the-throat fast hardcore, but with enough subtleties to make it an engaging listen. I remember seeing SIN ORDEN when they were teenagers talking about Columbine, but now they're adults with songs discussing the workaday world, Bush, safe sex, and the fragility of the activist community. This split is a great document of two hardworking, awesome bands from the modern Chicago punk scene. (CI)
(ASF, PO Box 803251, Chicago, IL 60680)

CONTAMINATORS – "Minimal Minds" EP

CONTAMINATORS is one of many recent bands regularly churning out their raw, simplistic bile via the classic 7" format (although now they have an LP under their belt as well). This EP contains three songs of noisy, demented, bare-bones punk. "Minimal Minds" is the hit with its catchy repetitive verse, but the other songs have a sufficient mix of annoying-ness and tunefulness, and will surely receive multiple spins from any discerning punk with a short attention span and a soft spot for tasteless, irritating, and catchy punk rock. Unfortunately, this'll most likely be out of print by the time you read this, which is annoying on a whole 'nother level, but if you're interested, you should keep your eyes open 'cos I'm sure another CONTAMINATORS release is pending. (CI)
(Menotropic, www.myspace.com/menotropicrecords)

THE CORPS – "Nail It Shut" CD

Super tough and burly rock 'n' roll inspired Oi! from the land down under. The CORPS wear their working class pride proudly and are not afraid to throw in some hardcore moments to spice the rack up. Like the first SKREWDRIVER LP if it was pumped full of steroids. (SD)
(Rebellion, www.rebellionrecords.nl)

MARTIN CREED – "Ooh" EP

Talk about art punk… This is actually more of a conceptual artifact than a musical one. Taking minimalism to its extreme, the song titles ("Ooh," "Fuck Off," and "Words") form the entirety of the lyrical content, sung either *a capella* or over a simple, repetitive, WIRE-like guitar and drum pattern. As a conceptual art piece, it fully works—some mug spent fourteen grand on the test pressing of this record, to listen to someone shout "fuck off" at them repeatedly. Musically, it's not unenjoyable but hardly essential. Still, I feel an overwhelming urge to listen to "Fuck Off" again. Perhaps I enjoy the abuse. (AM)
($10ppd: Smart Guy, 3288 21st St #32, San Francisco, CA 94110, www.smartguyrecords.com)

CRETEENS – "K-Way Bleu" EP

On this, their 1,000th record, the CRETEENS are back with more dark, deranged, fuzzed-out, garage-y punk tunes for those insatiable fiends that must exist to warrant so many of records of this style every month. I gotta say, I'm pretty tired of this sound unless the band is French. They just seem to have that sort of *je ne sais quoi* (sorry, couldn't help it) that it takes to keep this style interesting. The sound I'm talking about is that Bermuda Triangle-like void that falls somewhere between the LOST SOUNDS and the REATARDS. Luckily, CRETEENS just so happen to be from the land of brie and croissants and hold my attention. (JU)
(Boom Chick, www.myspace.com/boomchickrecords)

THE CRUNKY KIDS – "Hardcore Malarky For Sure!!" EP

This band has a NEGATIVE APPROACH feel mixed with KILL YOUR IDOLS. The sound is raw—loud, blown-out drums and guitar with more fuzz than your cat. The lyrics are a little silly however, with songs like "Shit Out the Poison" and "X From Outer Space." Of course, I guess if you're from Missouri there's probably not much to do besides take shits and watch shitty midnight movies. (PL)
(Motorchest, c/o Lonnie Davis, PO Box 725, Poplar Bluff, MO 63901)

DAISY CUTTER / WORLD EATER – split EP

Indiana is coming on strong with one of the best splits I have ever heard. WORLD EATER starts this off with pissed-as-fuck vocals and pounding hardcore thrash. Five tracks to ruin your good-time groove. If EYEHATEGOD was on speed instead of Mary Jane, this would best describe WORLD EATER. On the flipside comes a destruction ride led by DAISY CUTTER. Beating you in the head 'til your nose is broken and you lose consciousness. Hard to read the lyrics but it doesn't matter 'cause this fucker will burn your mind. You need this split, and get it soon because there are only 500 of these puppies. You can get colored vinyl thru… (JH)
(Constant Migraine, 749 East Dr, Apt. C, Indianapolis, IN 46201, www.constantmigrainezine@hotmail.com)

DANGERLOVES – "Easy" EP

I thought the DANGERLOVES' first single was worth picking up based on the strength of the A-side; this EP, their follow-up, makes me wonder if that song was a fluke. While not terrible, the three tracks on *Easy* lack the hooks of classic power pop but are not aggressive enough to respectably be considered punk. The result is an unmemorable record of melodic, vaguely up-tempo rock 'n' roll (for lack of a better word) with bad cover art. I hope they tighten up in time for the next one. (CS)
(Dead Ideas, PO Box 851, Austin, TX 78767)

DEAD DOGS – "Deadfuckingdogs" EP

Raw, dirge-y stuff, self-released from the streets of Winnipeg, Canada! DEAD DOGS calls themselves crust punk, which I can sort of see, but they also have some definite old school USHC and classic Euro influences. It's hard not to see a little NEGATIVE APPROACH in there. Nothing that blows me out of the water, but it's good bread-and-butter stuff. (NM)
(self-released, deaddogs@riseup.net)

DEAD GHOSTS – "What to Do/God Only Knows"

I know I shouldn't judge a book by its cover, but I was expecting a band called DEAD GHOSTS to sound a bit harder. After closer inspection of the actual cover of this single, I see a drawing of a longhaired man with a long beard and that's what this sounds like. Pretty, jangle-y garage rock. Of course, by that I mean DEAD GHOSTS sound a heck of a lot like BLACK LIPS. The recording is covered in distortion and static to give it an older feeling, and, if I am to go by that cover again, recorded in mono. Very nice. (CK)
(Milk N Herpes, no address)

DEEP SLEEP – "Manic Euphoria" EP

With its inventive riffs and arrangements establishing a distinctive style, DEEP SLEEP's previous EP was one of the best HC records to come out in 2007. I was a little disappointed by this new EP on first listen, as it's comparatively a little more straightforward; on subsequent spins, however, I've really come around, and I think I can say that I like it as much as the first one. While the band's somewhat off-tempo style is still evident in the songwriting, they seem to be moving away from a strictly "no-frills" early-'80s hardcore sound (just a bit), adding some melodic guitar work here and there that actually reminds me of early DAG NASTY or other "Revolution Summer"-era DC bands. Simple but cool artwork and layout round off this well-above-average record. (CS)
(Grave Mistake, PO Box 12482, Richmond, VA 23241, www.gravemistakerecords.com)

DEMONS CLAWS – "Fucked On Ketamine/Always Be My Friend"

Two jangle-y rock songs from DEMONS CLAWS. The songs are nice and all, but I like these guys so much more when they are noisy and cacophonous. Plus, I am more of a fan of songs about smoking pot. Hallucinogens don't do it for me lyrically. (CK)
(Rob's House, www.robshouserecords.com)

DISCHARGE – "War Is Hell" LP

I think by now everyone has an idea of what to expect from the new, improved DISCHARGE. Or should I say RAT-CHARGE? If you were expecting a resurrection of everyone's favorite hardcore band, you may be really digging deep to like this record, because, although *War Is Hell* isn't bad, it doesn't stand up to any of the classics. It actually doesn't stand up to even the last couple of great VARUKERS albums. The drums are really wimpy sounding and the guitar isn't out in the forefront. I don't hear the wild bass of the old days, and with the absence of Cal, this record just fall short. I bet they recorded this digital and never thought twice that the sound would never match the thick analog sound they achieved at Clay Studios with the classics *Never Again, Hear Nothing See Nothing Say Nothing,* and *Why?* This record does include the unreleased 1978 demo, that, if you haven't heard, sounds more akin to late-'70s snotty punk bands like SEX PISTOLS (although way rawer in production) than the sound DISCHARGE forged a few years later. This album has more in common with all the generic D-beat bands, down to the terrible art, than a classic DISCHARGE steamroller. *War Is Hell* is obviously a must for completists and collectors especially because of the demo tracks; personally though I'll satisfy my tastes for D-beat with the impending new WARCRY album. (WK)
(Unrest, www.unrestrecords.com)

DISRUPT – LP

DISRUPT has always been a favorite of mine in the arena of political crust/grind. They are one of those bands that is incredibly influential yet doesn't really get their due. This is a collection of seven unreleased songs from recording sessions for the SAUNA and WARCOLLAPSE splits. They have the same amped-up sound as those splits and as I expected, this is some pretty blazing stuff! Very cool gatefold layout, and 180 gram vinyl, but only half of each side is used, making me wonder why they couldn't throw a few more tracks on there (Live? Demo? Anything?). (NM)
(Unrest, www.unrestrecords.com)

DOWN AND AWAY – "Reclaim the Radio" CD

Never would have known this band was Swedish without looking, because they have a totally American sound. I had to do a double-take to make sure it wasn't a lost ANN BERRETTA album! Sounding a lot like Richmond bands such as the aforementioned, SIXER, and AVAIL, this is pretty great if you dig the style. Super catchy, tightly played, it's a little….uh…sterile, if you know what I mean? But more than worthy for fans of RANCID, AVAIL, etc. (TB)
(Warbird Entertainment, 165 Courtland St, Suite A 213, Atlanta, GA 30303, www.warbirdentertainment.com)

EARTH DIES SCREAMING – "Blinded by the Light" EP

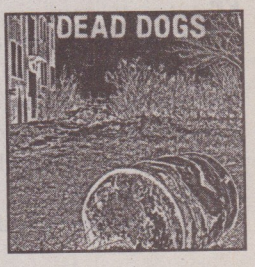
Thrashy old-school punk with screamed vocals and gratuitous solos. Sounds a little like they're pullin' from *Land Speed*-era 'DÜ. Absolutely ridiculous cover art that's almost so-bad-it's-good. As a whole, this record is not too bad, but the solos can be a bit much. (P$))
(Home Of The Brave, www.myspace.com/homeofthebraverecords)

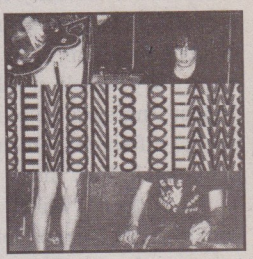
ENDLESS MIKE JAMBOX – "Another Hot Freshy Freshy" CD

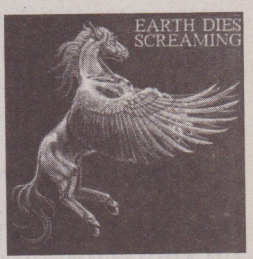
These Delaware folks have a cool amateur punk thing going on. This reminds me of a mix of LATTERMAN and WESTON. *Another Hot Freshy Freshy* is a strong full-length that is sure to make my yearly top ten with its good variety of pop, punk, and fun indie. (RL)
(Madison Underground. 1414 N. Harrison St, Wilmington, DE 19806, www.madisonundergroundpress.com)

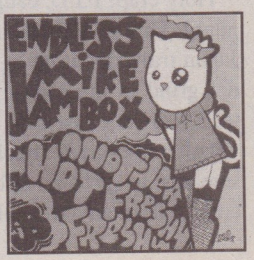
ESTROGEN HIGHS – "Can't Complain/She's Gone Missing"

Around the time that the *Vice* reading hordes discovered the BLACK LIPS, two things happened; first, the moustache ceased being ironic, and second, every shag-topped over-sexed booger-sugar-fiend with a '60s Sears brand guitar started a band that wanted to sound like something off the *Pebbles* comps with BEATLES-esque harmonies. In reality that meant, "Hey, let's try and ape all the influences that we can detect in the BLACK LIPS' sound!" You all know what happened, right? Claim whatever influence you want (to be fair, I have no idea what type of influences ESTROGEN HIGHS have, but just go with me here, will ya?), it sounds like the BLACK LIPS. That's by no means bad—I love that









band who's name I've said too many times already—but let's try not to kill a good thing. OK? With that said, this is a really likeable single. It's catchy as fuck and has a good energy. What more could you ask of a pop record? (JU)
(Never Heard Of It, www.myspace.com/estrogenhighs)

ESTROGEN HIGHS – "She Don't Bother" EP

Not the out-of-the-ball-park slam of the other ESTROGEN HIGHS disc that came in this month, this is a more restrained bit of mutant-mold grown from the roots of *Back From the Grave*, a la early BLACK LIPS. Still mighty good. (DD)
(Milk 'n' Herpes, no address)

THE FAD – "Kill Punk Rock Stars" CD

This band certainly leaves no base uncovered and plays a mediocre version of any style of punk you can think of. Ska, emo, hardcore…they can do it all. The singer has that perfect singing/screaming voice that makes it hard to differentiate them from any other mall punk band. They throw a couple of hardcore songs in there, which sound like the most cookie-cutter version of modern hardcore I have ever heard. (PL)
(Bankshot, PO Box 220344, Brooklyn, NY 11222, www.bankshotrecords.com)

FEELIN' LUCKY– LP

FEELIN' LUCKY plays basic, lo-fi garage punk. This LP wouldn't be out of place in a record collection that's heavy on the '90s Rip-Off catalog. FEELIN' LUCKY's sound is fairly blues based, but the raspy, snot drenched vocals and simple, quick drumming keep things firmly in the world of punk. Overall, these Aussies retain a simple and straightforward sound, which I imagine is a plus for purists, but folks lookin' for music that pushes the envelope will not find much to chew on here. (CI)
(Swashbuckling Hobo, www.myspace.com/swashbucklinghoborecords)

FLAGITIOUS IDIOSYNCRASY IN THE DILAPIDATION / INSECT WARFARE – split EP

Holy crap! F.I.D. caught me completely off guard. This all-female grind powerhouse from Japan truly rips it up in a major way. They're def grind in the classic sense, without being technical. It's just raw, heavy, and fast. The vocalist bounces back and fourth from screams to growls effortlessly and, not to come off in any way like a stupid dude, but I've never heard such a low grunt come out of a woman. This side is a great surprise. With INSECT WARFARE, on the other hand, I knew exactly what to expect; top-notch grind of the highest order. I love this band and everything they do is perfect. This is pure, face-melting, blasting music that never lets up. A killer split. It should be noted that this review is incomplete, as this record comes as part of the current issue (#19) of *Short Fast & Loud* fanzine. I need to hurry up and snag myself a copy, stat! To see the rest, find Mr. Mason's review in the zine review section. (JU)
(Six Weeks, www.sixweeksrecords.com)

FRANCIS HAROLD AND THE HOLOGRAMS – "The Eagle Can't Fly With One Wing" EP

The riff is "Tidal Wave"-like but as if it was filmed on a Super-8 camera with the sound out of sync. You know the ELECTRIC EELS song about tidal waves? It's the idea of rock music completely distorted and disturbing, the taste of puking in your mouth, writing a song about it. It's the new thing to do, I hear: this sound, make a new identity, year-zero apocalyptic music, bad vibrations, shitty drugs, the morning after, waking up on a lawn somewhere out of your element like in a hallowed frat house exploitation movie, but you never went to college. It's not *rock* like PISSED JEANS or CLOCKCLEANER, but if those bands play Bisbee, AZ, these fucks probably support them, though I don't know if I believe Bisbee, AZ actually exists. Somewhere on the internet, this single is generating buzz and messageboards are vibrating and gleaming, so hurry and send off for this before your turntable loses. (LG)
(Going Underground, www.goingundergroundrecords.com)

THE FRANKLIN COVER-UP – "Commercial" CD

They love REFUSED and sound like a half-assed attempt at BOTCH. They also mention "g-d" in six of nine of their soulless, empty, and uninspiring songs. This reeks of Christian hardcore and its bullshit infecting the punk scene. The label name is a dead giveaway. Sorry, I detest this shit from the bottom of my heart. This stupid crap has no place in the punk rock scene *ever*. Go hock your shit somewhere else, not here. I hope you all die in a car fire. Keep music evil motherfuckers. Get the new DEICIDE record, *Till Death Do Us Part*, out in May. (JH)
(Seven Trumpets, www.seventrumpetsrecordings.com)

FRUSTRATION – CD

Here's a CD version of the first amazing 12" EP France's FRUSTRATION put out a couple of years ago. The four tracks from that EP are augmented by two cover versions recorded for compilations—an ANTEENAGERS song and "Holocaust" by CRISIS. If you haven't heard this band, they play an amalgam of various punk and post-punk styles, at any given time coming across like TUBEWAY ARMY, JOY DIVISION, or WIRE. The singer has a deadpan squall that falls somewhere between Ian Curtis and David Thomas. The whole is greater than the sum of its influences though, and unlike many of the more popular bands chasing the '80s post-punk rabbit down an ever-narrowing fox-hole, FRUSTRATION never loses their punk edge. (AM)
(Manic Depression, c/o Lionel Arnoux, 20 Rue Du Transvaal, 75020 Paris, FRANCE, www.manicdepressionrecords.com)

GENTLEMAN JESSE / JOSEPH PLUNKET – split EP

The much-hyped (and deservingly so) GENTLEMAN JESSE delivers one song that's less power pop and more REPLACEMENTS. There are hints of the REIGNING SOUND with country undertones, making this a good accompaniment to a cheap bottle of bourbon. JOSEPH PLUNKET keeps the Americana theme going with more of the above influences but even less punk. Nice. (SD)
(Rob's House, www.robshouserecords.com)

GLASS HEROES – "Get Out Alive/Kick Down the Doors"

Yes sir! After fifteen years in the punk rock trenches, the GLASS HEROES are starting to get the respect they deserve! These ne'er-do-wells from Phoenix, Arizona have a polished delivery yet still retain some of the street-rock urgency that you might hear in ROSE TATTOO or the HENCHMEN. Side A is the title tune, "Get Out Alive." This rocker starts with a traditional melodic blueprint for anthemic punk similar to well-crafted songs from the greatest English punk of all times, the UK SUBS!! Most enjoyable! Side B offers up "Kick Down the Doors" with a slower, more studied approach to punk rock. The one-sheet from TKO suggests that the GLASS HEROES single would appeal to CHELSEA fans—"Kick Down The Doors" seems to confirm that assessment. This is a solid rock 'n' roll 7". When they play live, the GLASS HEROES well likely tear you a new asshole! Keep an eye peeled for a full-length from the GLASS

HEROES on TKO Records in the near future. (BR)
(TKO, 8941 Atlanta Ave. #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92546, www.tkorecords.com)

THE GLAZERS – "High Heeled Romance" EP

This is on Rip-Off Records. Three non-descript bar rock daddy-o's and a dame in a striped shirt adorn the cover with a shitty computer-generated typeface of their awful band name "wildly" "scrawled" across them. The music? Take NIKKI AND THE CORVETTES and HOLLY AND THE ITALIANS, squeeze out all the vigor and youthful excitement, and you have another generic female-fronted garage band with power pop tendencies appearing at a bar full of washed-up, bored old people who saw the RAMONES in '89, maaaaaan. (LG)
(Rip-Off, 581 Maple Ave, San Bruno, CA 94066)

GODFODDER – "No Sleep" EP

"No Sleep" is the choicest of the eight terse, fresh HC tunes here—guaranteed to chase away the last trace of sleep with an AOD-like dedication to no-nonsense performing. The remainder mostly stays in the same style: crisp anthems that have the sense of being performed live, and each tune has no fat and is all business, mostly ending just after making its point. A lot of fun, even if we're familiar with the basic style. (SS)
(Motorchest, c/o Lonnie Davis, PO Box 725, Poplar Bluff, MO 64902)

GOOD RIDDANCE – "Remain in Memory: The Final Show" CD

GOOD RIDDANCE has been around since 1994 and played their final show in their hometown of Santa Cruz in May '07. Along with LAGWAGON, NO USE FOR A NAME, STRUNG OUT, and to some extent PROPAGHANHI, they helped pioneer the "Fat sound"—fast-paced, melodic Californian punk mixed with light hardcore. I liked their first album *For God and Country* when it came out, but there was such an avalanche of this stuff in the mid-'90s that it was easy to burn out on it. It was a little too accessible and one-dimensional. Nevertheless, I have to take my hat off to them for sticking with for so long and keeping their sound and remaining political in their lyrics. After eight(!) albums I guess they'd pretty much flogged it to death and decided to call it quits. This is a live recording of their aforementioned final show—there is material from every album and the sound quality is good. You pretty much already know if you want this or not. (AD)
(Fat Wreck, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.fatwreck.com)

GORDON IVY & THE JAYBIRDS – "A Midnight Rave With..." EP

Japan's GORDON IVY & THE JAYBIRDS play a straightforward style of hardcore—quick parts and with back-ups and breakdowns. Not too far removed from the 625 style. Cool first effort by this band that rocks a mod look but plays quick, straightforward hardcore. (MS)
(Choking Hazard, chokinghazardrec@hotmail.com)

GROUCHO MARXISTS – "Manifesto!" CD

GROUCHO MARXISTS' sound is all over the place. I hear DESCENDENTS, WEEZER, and THE ERGS! All pop-based, but nothing on this gets me excited. No mix-tape material but I do see some potential. (RL)
(Wrapped in Plastic, www.myspace.com/wrappedinplasticrecords)

GUINEA WORMS – "Box of Records" EP

I'd heard their song "Soiled Sender" (not on this 7"), which sorta destroys WIRE in its awesomeness, so I figured they were a pretty straightforward great new-ish punk band. Then I heard this little guy. Side A: Really, really dumb M.O.T.O. with those same kind of pederast/science teacher vocals. Side B: Has a trumpet and goes bomp-BANG-bom-BANG 75 thousand times, and has the best lyrics I've heard in months: "Got a bag of silver dollars in a post office box and two pistols with the serial numbers filed off." I also like to imagine he's screaming, "I destroyed your purse!" (JP)
(Columbus Discount, www.columbusdiscountrecords.com)

HAMMER BROS. – "The Vitality" LP

FNS Records presents the powerful hardcore rants of HAMMER BROS. These Merrimack, Massachusetts hardcore veterans have embraced the manic thrash of AGNOSTIC FRONT and CRO-MAGS and laced it with hard-edged metal-flavored guitar rage. HAMMER BROS has the occasional slow breakdown that mutates into a violent speed-thrash monster! This is balls-out hardcore for the very best of the thick-necked knuckle-draggers in the pit! That assessment is offered with respect! HAMMER BROS is the real deal! Listen to this brutal thrash with caution! These fucks play hard with no patience for you Warped Tour college types! (BR)
(FNS, www.fnsrecords.com)

THE HIPSHAKES – "Live at Rob's House" EP

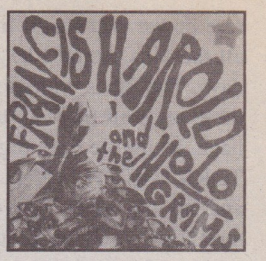
This EP is the HIPSHAKES (you guessed it!) recorded live at Rob's House (no way!) in the ATL. Personally, I've never really been much of a HIPSHAKES fan, but I could find the appeal if I was forced to do such a thing. What you get are three bare-bones rock 'n' roll boppers that must have had the room in a beer-spilling dance-party frenzy. (JU)
(Rob's House, www.myspace.com/robshouserecords)

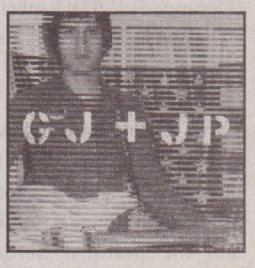
THE HIPSHAKES – "Want You Around/I Don't Know"

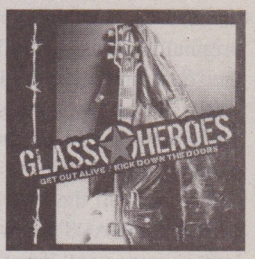
THE HIPSHAKES may have selected the best possible name for their band, as it fits their sound perfectly. This is fuzzed out, garage rock 'n' roll that is dished out with a vengeance. Two tracks and both are rockers. Well done, lads. (KK)
(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504, www.slovenly.com)

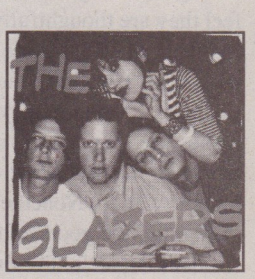
THE IMPULSE INT'L – "Arm the Girls / Run and Hide"

Snappy, poppy, and as jumpy as a '77 punk on a pogo stick. Sharp bursts of the JAM mix in with that super









rare power pop sound from the late '70s that all the kids seem to be rubbing balls to now days. The tunes will stick—you'll be singing these ones all the way to the dole office and back. If you've been digging the TRANZMITORS, GENTLEMAN JESSE, STATUES, and all the other new breed of punked up mods then you'll absolutely love this. Another winner from the label you all love to hate…get over it. (SD)
(Deranged, 2700 Lower Rd, Roberts Creek, BC, V0N 2W4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com)

INNER TERRESTRIALS – "X" CD

This UK band offers a mix of styles popularized by their fellow countrymen—most noticeably the ska punk of CITIZEN FISH and the political hardcore of CONFLICT (though punky reggae, punky dub, punky folk, and other punky influences peak through at times)—on this thirteen-track CD that was originally released in 2003. Both the ska and the 'core are performed exceedingly competently, though when it's actually together in the same song, it occurs to me that the two genres don't really mesh too well. Anyhow, that's only half the story, since for the INNER TERRESTRIALS I'd wager the lyrics are at least as important, if not more, than the music. Strong left-wing sentiments here, and while I feel they are thoughtfully conceived and coming from the right place, sometimes the blunt delivery ("They have the Third World clapped in chains…while money rapes the earth" etc.) makes me long for the more nuanced presentation of Dick Lucas, or even the oddball humor of Jello. Nonetheless, I hope they keep on fightin' the good fight. (CS)
(Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134, www.rodentpopsicle.com)

INQUISITION – "Uproar: Live and Loud" CD & DVD

I'd be hard pressed to adequately express to the world how into this band I was as a wee pup. A friend had gotten a hold of an advanced copy of their *Revolution: I Think it's Called Inspiration* album long before it came out (It might have even been like a year early. I seem to remember waiting and waiting and waiting) and we listened to it over and over on a drive from Boston to Burlington, VT to the point where we knew every single word and had pig-pile sing-alongs in the van even before we were half-way to our destination. This DVD is like that, only there's a lot more people and it's in a much bigger space—Alley Katz in Richmond, VA to be exact. During their existence from 1991-1995, INQUISITION dropped a couple 7" releases, the aforementioned full-length, and apparently an earlier album called *Broken Songs* that I had no idea even existed until now. In my mind, this band is one of, if not *the* best pop-punk acts ever. They were catchy and smart. INQUISITION called it a day in 1995 but reunited for two back-to-back shows in 2007, which are featured on this DVD. The footage is shot from a few different cameras/angles and the quality of the audio/video are of the highest quality and musically, it's as if they never messed a step. From what memories I can still cull up regarding the records, I think every song from the 7", the *Revolution…* album and the split with KILARA are all here in there deservingly energetic glory. Fans of STRIKE ANYWHERE, ANN BERETTA, and RIVER CITY HIGH take note 'cause members of all those bands started out here. Aces all around! (JU)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, noidearecords.com)

JEAN MILLS SOCIETY TORCH – "Start Tomorrow" EP

If you like getting drunk on a couple of 40s of Olde English and eating Taco Bell with a couple of friends while listening to the NECROS and NEGATIVE APPROACH and IRON MAIDEN on cassette, this is the jam for you. Reminiscing my younger days in the Midwest when hardcore was good, fast, silly, and brutal all at the same time. I love this record and so will you. And I'm not even going to mention the lyrics, which are awesome as all hell. If SEX VID and DOUBLE NEGATIVE turn your head, the JEAN MILLS SOCIETY TORCH will break your fucking neck. (JH)
(Firestarter, 2981 Falls Road, Baltimore, MD 21211, www.firestarterrecords.com)

JPNRDS – "Lullaby Death Jams" CD

A two-man outfit from Canada that makes as much noise as ten. I'm lost in the many influences that come flooding in—hints of that early AmRep sound mix with the darker moments of MCCLUSKY, yet abundant melody creeps through the static, which brings to mind some the sweeter moods of PAVEMENT and SONIC YOUTH with a slight aroma of GUIDED BY VOICES. Reassuringly old whilst bringing something new and exciting to the table. (SD)
(Self-released, japandriods@gmail.com)

JUGGLING JUGULARS – "Salute No One" CD

Great hardcore punk with just the slightest metallic tint from this long-running Finnish band, with female/male vocals, and lyrics in English. They're tough as nails yet manage to incorporate more than enough hooks, melodies, and catchy choruses to keep things interesting. There's something about them—I can't usually handle hardcore, but this stuff is great—it's not generic at all. No one does melodic hardcore like the Scandinavians (mores the pity) and this band along with SO MUCH HATE, DRUNK, and LIFE BUT HOW TO LIVE IT? are the best there is. (AD)
(Twisted Records, Reutweg 1a. 76327 Pfinztal, GERMANY)

KAH-ROE-SHI / PAZAHORA – split EP

I had never heard of these bands before and this was an interesting introduction. Very cool layout, awesome artwork that's hard not to notice. PAZAHORA, from Singapore, plays fairly straight up crustcore with some old grind influences and has pretty ripping male/female vocals. At times they reminded me of DISRUPT or DESTROY. KAH-ROE-SHI is much heavier and denser, and has melodic elements but falls in the dark crust category to my ears, which is awesome because I love it! KAH-ROE-SHI is from Malaysia. Awesome split release on Singapore and American labels! Only 100 copies in the US, so act fast! (NM)
(Diseased, www.diseasedrecords.com)

L'ODI SOCIAL – "Que Pagui Pujol + Esventats + Extras" CD

I wish Martin had gotten this for review instead of me—I feel wildly unqualified—Martin Sorrondeguy where are you when I need you? Anyway, this is some classic Barcelona hardcore from the mid-'80s compiled onto one CD! How can you go wrong with Spanish punk/hardcore? The first eight or so songs (the ultra-rare *Que Pagui Pujol* EP from 1986) are incredible, fast, raging super tight hardcore with furious back up vocals. Then they kind of lose me with a ska song and some more metallic generic sounding styles, but I guess that's just how things were as the '80s progressed. If you dig shit like ANTI/DOGMATIKSS, HHH, GRB, etc this CD is right up your street. (LG)
(B Core, www.bcoredisc.com)

LIVING DARKNESS – "Self Titled" EP

Toronto's LIVING DARKNESS sounds just like CURSED, and for obvious reasons. Which is not a bad thing if your tastes run along the lines of metallic hardcore. Personally, I prefer RUINATION, but regardless… Four tracks on here and the lyrics have mainly a deeply personal content dealing with

fear and questioning man's validity. I actually like the lyrics way better than the record but it's starting to grow on me the more I listen to it. Worth checking out if you are into this genre. (JH)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636 Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

LOST SOUNDS – "Motorcycle Leather Boy / Love Killed My Brain"

Two blown-out, cranked up covers of OBLIVIANS songs by this defunct band. Only you know if you really need this. (AM)
(Tic Tac Totally, PO Box 558383, Chicago, IL 60655-8383)

MANIKIN – "M Theory" EP

Me, and the circle of no-hopers I call my friends, are fiends for this band. One of the reasons my band traveled half-way across the country was to play with them. Wildly underrated, MANIKIN are the finest purveyors of "dark wave" punk out there. In league with bands like FRUSTRATION and TYVEK, MANIKIN uses tense guitars and a wall of feedback to ply their dark punk. Sure there's the bleakness of WARSAW and WIRE, but it has more artiness and drive than that. Devastating top ten material. (TB)
(Super Secret, PO Box 1585, Austin, TX 78767, www.supersecretrecords.com)

MINCH / SLOTH – split EP

Fun, ridiculous, errr, grind? Noisecore? Punk? There are 20 tracks of goofiness on this split 7" with lots of samples, jokes, and a little bit of music thrown in once in a while—two Ohio bands having fun. SLOTH contains ex-members of NUNSLAUGHTER and MINCH contain ex-members of SCHNAUZER. Song titles like "Evil Has No Laundry" and "Sloth's Second Megadeth Cover" should give you a good idea of the attitude. Not that the music is the same but these 7" sides are put together like a CROM record. (MH)
(Agromosh, www.myspace.com/agromoshrex)

THE MONOCLES – "Out Of Your Mind" EP

I find it tough to sort of nail this one down, which is generally good news for the listener. This is mid-tempo, kind of dark rock 'n' roll/punk that approaches weirdness at times. (That was actually meant as compliment.) You get the feeling that these guys are real sensitive—you know, the sort of guys that could contemplate a rip in a couch for hours. (KK)
(Loose, no address)

MORGUE MART – "Self Titled" CD

This is a lot better hearing it the second time around. Beer + crossover = good times, and I'm *way* into it. CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER, SEPTIC DEATH, DIRTY ROTTEN IMBECILES, and the ACCUSED are good reference points to start at. Not bad stuff. Write them and buy their CD. (JH)
(Dead Slab, www.myspace.com/morguemart)

MULETRAIN – "The Ansar" EP

MULETRAIN plays gutsy rock 'n' roll similar to THE DICTATORS and TURBONEGRO but with a more updated appeal. Sounds like they took the influences of '70s rock and added loads of energy and scrappier distortion heading in the wall of sound direction. I must also mention that the vocals really stand out and the recording is thick and defined. This EP features three originals and a really great cover of DISCHARGE's "Ain't No Feeble Bastard." Don't know what MULETRAIN means but I hope it has something to do with Spain's insatiable hunger to be the country with the highest *mulletude*? These punx get a ten. (WK)
(Beat Generation, www.munster-records.com)

NAZI DEATH CAMP – "Mental Problems" EP

Fuzzy rockin' punk shit somewhere outta Europe. There are lots of effects on the vocals, which have that singing out of an empty tunnel sound. SPITS and RAMONES come through these tunes along with many others from the post Rip Off Records school. Not a bad listen, but not mind-blowing either. (MS)
(Ratbite, ratbiterecords@gmail.com)

NECROPOLIS – "Song for a Working Man / Cocksuckerbastardmotherfucker"

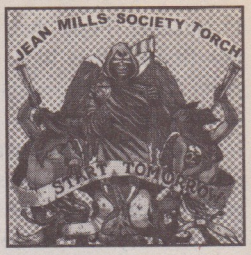
Maybe it will come as a shock to you, but not all the equipment here at the *Maximum* house works properly all of the time. This isn't the first time I've listened to this record, but it is the first time I've listened to it coming out of just one speaker. If you're familiar with NECROPOLIS, you might think that wouldn't affect the listening pleasure all that much. Not so! How can one enjoy the push/pull, claustrophobic, clanging, and monotonous, senselessness of "Cocksuckerbastardmotherfucker" on only one speaker? You can't. After fixing the problem on our end I can fully appreciate the hopelessness that the flip projects. Both sides of this release are good, but the B-side really sticks out as the sound of knuckle-dragging desperate times. (AL)
(Columbus Discount, www.columbusdiscountrecords.com)

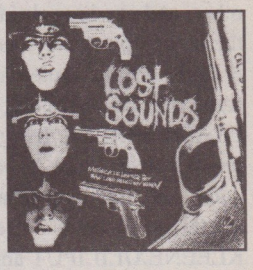
NEIN NEIN NEIN – "Endless Bullshit" CD

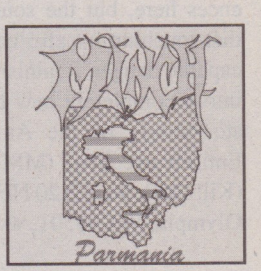
NEIN NEIN NEIN is some German stuff that does the hardcore thing with some screamo stylings. Six songs that bring to mind REFUSED and old AmRep Records stuff. Just ok. (RL)
(Twisted Chords, www.twisted-chords.de)

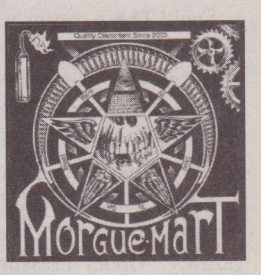
NEW BLOODS – "The Secret Life" LP

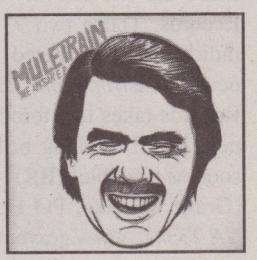
For real, when I walked in and saw that I was assigned NEW BLOODS to review I think I squealed out loud. I pre-ordered this record and it hasn't left the turntable since I got it in the mail. I first saw this band when they played in my basement a couple years ago when I was living in Olympia. They played a stupefying set to a girls-in-the-front crowd, raging through all the songs with the girls in the pit screaming "what the fuck?!?" at each other in between. This band is fully mind-bursting-











ly amazing. From their cassette demo up to this first LP they have fully failed to disappoint. The band consists of drums, bass, three distinct female voices, and violin. Now, for me, violins in punk always fall into the same category as saxophones—it's either really good or really bad. The NEW BLOODS violin definitely falls on the really good side, racing alongside the super dynamic bass lines, whisper-growl vocals tumbling over each other, and crashing drums that sound as if all the landscapes were speeding along past you. It feels deeply rooted in history, but at the same time as refreshing and incomparable as ERASE ERRATA. It's got all the darkness of the northwest, the dance-ability of a party band, and intelligence and emotions beyond anything. They get compared to KLEENEX/LILIPUT and THE RAINCOATS a lot, and there are definite post-punk influences here, but the sound goes way beyond that touching on afro-beat, dub, narratives, a capella, danger, feminism, community, and on into a completely new beast. This is modern storytelling of the American underground. Entirely excellent. (MM)
(Kill Rock Stars, 120 NE State Ave, PMB 418. Olympia, WA 98501, www.killrockstars.com)

NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE – "Claustrophobic" EP

Fuck! These cretins will break your fucking head! This dangerous type of thrash blows away all that pop punk that keeps dribbling into your world! NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE plays their hardcore with reckless abandon! Clearly this is bad music for unrepentant humans. NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE storm through "Control," "Sick And Tired," "Last Straw," "Under Pressure," and "Hypocrite." Every song is seething with anger! You have heard the two EPs on Get Back/Even Worse Records. Those two 7" records give you an indication how crazed these fucks are! The new *Claustrophobic* EP on Grave Mistake Records takes this ferocious punk rock to the next level! Fucking brilliant! Get this EP as soon as possible! (BR)
(Grave Mistake, PO Box 12482, Richmond, VA 23341, www.gravemistakerecords.com)

NOMATRIX – "EP" CD

NOMATRIX sounds a lot like early BAD RELIGION, which I guess is better than the many bands that sound like the seventh album by BAD RELIGION. Early West Coast hardcore fans might like this, but I certainly didn't. (RL)
(Dead Lamb, www.deadlambrecords.com)

NOMEANSNO – "0+2=1" 2xLP

There are good bands, there are great bands, and then there are the bands—BLACK SABBATH, the RAMONES, DISCHARGE, etc.—that are so groundbreaking and crucial that they spawn an entirely new genre of music and legions of imitators. OK, I'm not exactly saying NOMEANSNO belongs in that exalted third category…they're kinda off such a linear diagram altogether, existing over to the left in a weird no-man's land; totally mind-blowing, but ultimately too singular to be mimicked. Musically, few from the punk realm can approach the band in terms of rhythmic tightness or complex (yet not overly so) arrangements (the MINUTEMEN and the MELVINS are two that spring to mind), and lyrically they have never feared to examine uncomfortable or just plain weird material. *0+2=1*, originally released in 1991, finds NOMEANSNO continuing at the high standard set by 1986's *Sex Mad* LP, and it features some of their best songs: "Everyday I Start to Ooze," "The Valley of the Blind," and the title track. And while the double-disc format may be a little decadent, it sure sounds fucking awesome. NOMEANSNO fans should be crawling out of whatever dark little cracks and crevices in which they reside to snatch this up, along with the other double-LP reissue reviewed this month. (CS)
(Wrong/Southern, www.southern.net)

NOMEANSNO – "The Day Everything Became Isolated and Destroyed" 2xLP

Double vinyl re-release of the CD re-release of the two records NOMEANSNO did in 1988. I think that this is their best material, along with *Sex Mad, Wrong*, and *0+2=1*; in fact, everything they did from 1986 to 1991 was great...but this is the best. NOMEANSNO really took the post-hardcore/punk sound as far as it could go, making music that was angry, haunting, rhythmic, and cerebral all at the same time. During their reign they were probably my favorite band, and along with FUGAZI, they were the greatest band to experience live. They endlessly toured—especially in Europe where I think they were more appreciated—maybe because of the social/political climate, maybe just because of the weather. Songs like "The Day Everything Became Nothing," "Forget Your Life," Dark Ages," "And That's Sad," "Small Parts Isolated and Destroyed," "Victory," and "Real Love" are rooted in my psychological make-up, Rob Wright's lyrics are poetry and verge on making sense of this crazy ride we call life. Years later this still sounds great—I didn't listen to them for a long time, and coincidentally, I had been listening to them, these records especially, lately. You can't keep a good band down. If you're lucky enough to grow old, one day you will end up forgetting most of the crap and mediocrity, but you'll remember bands like NOMEANSNO. I'll always remember what this band meant to me and love them for it. (AD)
(Wrong/Southern, www.southern.net)

NO PEACE? – "Zombie Brains" EP

Cleveland has been near the top of the heap over the course of the last few years, as far as producing top-notch hardcore with a noticeably regional sound. This may be due to the incestuous nature of the bands themselves, seeming to have very few branches on the family tree. With that said, NO PEACE? is no exception, sporting members from UPSTAB (a personal fave), GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS, and PUNCTURE WOUND. As expected from that pedigree, this band rips it up like no one's business. Think the ferocity of classic US hardcore with more than just a touch of first-wave Japanese hardcore. The music is raging, the vocals are pissed, and combined together you get one nihilistic cocktail. Record of the month, for sure. (JU)
(Decision of Fate, c/o Jamie Grant, 1932 Youll St. #50, Niles, OH 44446, play_it_faster @hotmail.com)

NO USE FOR A NAME – "The Feel Good Record of the Year" CD

While not quite living up to its tongue-in-cheek title the latest NUFAN album is a very pleasant listen nonetheless. It has all the trademark qualities that you've come to expect from these long running members of the Fat roster: super tight vocal harmonies, punchy guitar parts, and catchy tunes. The band throws in a few twists to keep things interesting like the acoustic number "Sleeping Between Trucks" and the piano ballad "Ontario," which sounds like a cross between QUEEN and JETS TO BRAZIL! Best song title award goes to "Night of the Living Living." All in all this is a really good disc. Not as good as their pinnacle release *Leche Con Carne* but still *really* good. "Sheesh. Must you always compare every NUFAN album to *Leche Con Carne*?"... Yes. Yes, I must. (RK)
(Fat Wreck, www.fatwreck.com)

NOWHITERAG – "Nothing Left" CD

'82 worship spiky political punk from Italy. Played tight, played loud, and played fast. This would fit nicely into the Punk Core crowd with enough EXPLOIDED, GBH, and

ONE WAY SYSTEM influences to admit it into the gang. (SD)
(Nuclear Chaos, www.nuclearchaos.th)

OHMFACOM – "Modern Merde" EP

Think a little less dynamic, more rock 'n' roll HATEPINKS. THE HATEPINKS reference may have come to mind because they're French and play punk with rock 'n' roll elements, but I think it works. Some of the record, especially the instrumental parts, could be shortened up. (P$)
(Reims Punk 'n' Roll, www.monsite.wanadoo.fr/ohmfacom)

OLD HAUNTS – "Poisonous Times" CD

The first time I saw the OLD HAUNTS was probably four or five years ago in one of those strange Olympia buildings that used to be a school, or a gym, or an Elks Club, but became an art center. An imposing white room with this compact, somewhat scowling three-man band in the center of it making music that was like a weird DEAD MOON filtered racket. The audience sat in polite rows on the floor and the whole thing felt kind of clinical and separated. The drummer then was this kid Danny, who also played for MOCKET and ENEMYMINE. The drummer on this record is Tobi Vail, who Mike Watt claims is not only one of the best drummers ever, but also heroic! *That's* an endorsement. The vocals I think are what strike me as most DEAD MOON-like, Craig Ekstine has that Northwestern-snarled-howl down. The music is classic sounding, like graveyard-teenage-drinking at 3am, and like the long line of mysterious Northwestern garage and basement bands, it's tired and triumphant at once. THE GUN CLUB is mentioned as an influence, and while I can sort of see that, this seems more malevolent somehow—like the GUN CLUB made their decadence kind of transcendent and joyous, but this seems more like waking up late in the day and playing scratchy bootlegs of THE WARLOCKS, then maybe a mystery 45 or two. It sounds like an Olympia house party. Ex-members of BIKINI KILL / FRUMPIES / GO TEAM / SERUM GREYS/SEDAN. (LG)
(Kill Rock Stars, 120 NE State Ave, PMB 418. Olympia, WA 98501, www.killrockstars.com)

PEDESTRIANS – "Killing Season" EP

I thought these guys had split, but hopefully that's not the case. Urgent, catchy early '80s inspired punk not unlike some of the SoCal gear such as ADOLESCENTS or some of the Dangerhouse bands, or for recent comparisons look towards the OBSERVERS or even the REGULATIONS. I can dig these guys on the long player, but PEDESTRIANS really comes alive on the short format. I've been flipping this over and over and am still not sick of it. There's a ton of bands mining up this kind of sound these days, but I really think the PEDESTRIANS are still top of the heap. (TB)
(Residue, 1446 W. Elmdale Ave, Apt 3W, Chicago, IL 60660, residuerecords@gmail.com)

PENETRATORS – "Bad Woman" LP

I don't think any band should ever reform. This could be worse than it is, but it's still not good. It's mostly covers of songs that have been covered a million times already, and I would bet that 999,999 of those covers were better executed by everyone not named the PENETRATORS. The STANDELLS "Dirty Water" and MUSIC MACHINE's "Talk Talk" are played pretty traditionally and everything sounds so-so but it's *soooooo boring*! There is no point in covering a song without either altering the song or performing it better than the original and the PENETRATORS fail to do either. I hope this is the last time I ever hear a cover of the ROLLING STONES "The Last Time." Well this could be… (MU)
(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504, www.slovenly.com)

PHASE TERMINALE / LA SOCIETE ELLE – split LP

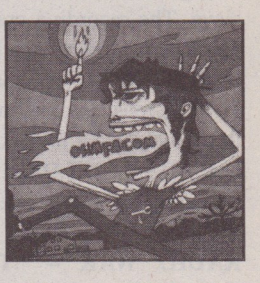
First off, neither of these bands follow any formulaic style present in punk rock these days. Both bands have weird song structures and sound as if the musicians are really hanging on to keep it together, yet manage to pull it off. The sound is very French in every sense. PHASE TERMINALE and LA SOCIETE ELLE play punk anthems like many street punk or Oi! bands from the region, but as I mentioned before, each with their own distinct flavor. This record is filled with, from what I can gather, tons of political fight and resistance to the government. Personally, LA SOCIETE ELLE is the band I like more, mainly due to the great sounding female vocals and her really good sense of rhythm. LA SOCIETE ELLE is even reminiscent of some of the Eastern European greats of the early '80s at times. The record comes with loads of political literature and has a list of DIY distros that they recommend. The art on the cover is really well done, pen and ink, and looks good. Unfortunately, the collages on the zine style insert look a bit low-res and reek of computer graphics. Overall, this record is good and shows a ton of effort that went into putting everything together, including the music. It's still growing on me, and that is a good sign. (WK)
(PhT, formeletale@no-log.org)

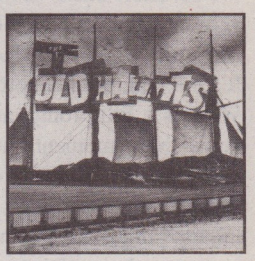
THE PLEASURE KILLS – "Smash Up the Radio/Over and Over"

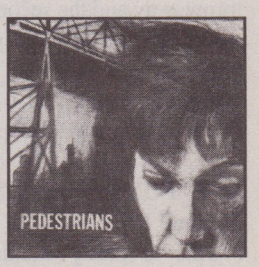
Oh yeah, I am fucking digging this. This is absolutely pure power pop goodness, complete with sticky sweet female vocals. This is what heaven is like, I am sure of it. Seriously, this has Kenny Kaos written all over it. (KK)
(Polypore, 1264 Grove St, San Francisco, CA 94117, www.myspace.com/thepleasurekills)

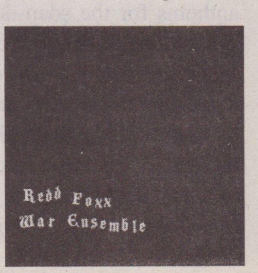
POPHORROR – "Child of Modern Times" EP

The only cool thing about this single is that the same three songs are on both sides of the record. Everything else is B-O-R-I-N-G. If you play this record at the incorrect 33rpm and get really, really stoned, you might be able to pretend it's the MELVINS playing bad indie









rock, which is what I recommend you do if you ever listen to this. (MU)
(Rich Bitch, PO Box 1402, Tempe, AZ 85280, www.richbitchrecords.com)

THE PUMPERS – "Don't Hafta Go" EP

Good, frantic rock 'n' roll like the CARBONAS (in how dude's voice always hangs on the last note of the line) but filtered through that good-old Denton fucked up power-pop sieve. The recording cracks me up—the lead guitar and singing are like ten times louder than the rest of the band—just like "Raw Power", maaaan! Way to go, kids, the record that cost you $8 to produce and beat out the new BILLY CHILDISH 7"! (JP)
(Rijapov, www.myspace.com/rijapovrecords)

RADIO WAR – "The Rising of the Talentless"

Four short tracks of modern hardcore in the vein of MODERN LIFE IS WAR. I always feel stuck reviewing these sorts of releases. It's not bad, but it's nothing new and RADIO WAR is a little rough around the edges. You know those moments when a band screams, "The weight of the world is dragging me down," and you don't believe them? One minute I dig it, and the next I think they could have done better. Right now, I'm not into this slow paced hardcore. The first track is a throwaway and the second track is fast, but it's not really that fast. I'd go see this band live, but I wouldn't buy the 7", even if it's nice yellow vinyl. (MH)
(Copper Lung, www.copperlungrecords.com)

RED FOXX WAR ENSEMBLE – "14th Dream" EP

This is pretty standard hardcore/punk—crappy recording, and a guitar player that sounds like he is trying to channel GREG GINN and does a not-so-great job of it. With so many great records out by bands playing this sound, this record is easily forgettable. Not the best of the bunch, but worth a listen. (PL)
(S.B.C, 5304 Ave. F, Austin, TX 78751)

THE RESTARTS – "Outsider" CD

London's RESTARTS have released their third album—one more disc of cider-and-glue anthems for the soap-dodgers of Hackney to grunt along to. Angry political sing-alongs are the order of the day, with the vocal duties shared amongst the band members in much the same way the lentils and chickpeas are divided up in an anarchist commune squat kitchen. The songs on *Outsider* tackle such issues as intelligent design, mindless violence, and the environment, as well as more personal topics like drinking too much and feeling like an outcast from society. This album's all well and good, and will not disappoint fans of the band or of street punk in general. But I have to say, musically, it does sound a bit predictable. Fast generic riffs, the occasional ska section, and terrace chant vocals. I mean, punk's punk and there's no need to go reinventing the wheel, but over the course of the thirteen songs it all started to sound a bit same-y. I don't want to sound too negative, because the RESTARTS are as good as, or better than, most of the bands doing this stuff. Maybe I'm waiting for someone to push things to the next level, and perhaps that's not a realistic expectation. (AM)
(Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134, www.rodentpopsicle.com)

THE RIPPERS – "It's Not a Place for the Men/Out of My Head for a Day"

I have reason to believe these cats are from Spain. It's because the folks they credit for sound and photos and such have names like Pietro and Pisano. You wouldn't know it listening to the music. You might think they were from Texas, but you'd be wrong. The music's got a lot going on. Try this: it's a sort of catchy, twangy rock 'n' roll kind of punk. It reminds me very much of POISON 13. If you know that band, you know what a compliment that is. (KK)
(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504, www.slovenly.com)

RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA / SOLID DECLINE – split LP

SOLID DECLINE is like if you occasionally interspersed SCHLONG (uh, the band) or VICTIMS FAMILY with super intense, relentless violent hardcore. It's absolutely vicious thrashing with brutal vocalizations and inspired lyrical topics, but the 16 tracks continually detour into quirky musical passages of all tempos before they quickly whiplash back into full tilt thrash... Similar in structure to the a lot of the experimentation of late '80s quirky Swedish hardcore like RAPED TEENAGERS or even the old American band TH' INBRED, but way less melodic, at triple speed, and *way* more brutal. The difference is also in SOLID DECLINE's modern delivery, which is completely manic like THE NEIGHBORS. It all makes for one of the more engaging sides of a record to come out from Germany in awhile. Austria's RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA sings in Spanish (with great COMES-styled female vocals) but their sound is total modern Brazilian hardcore—super amped, drum driven, unrelenting breakneck hardcore. In no way as chaotic as SOLID DECLINE, but the ten tracks match the intensity perfectly. Great split in a beautiful, nice, fold-out silk screened cover! (KS)
(Thought Crime, c/o Thomas Franke, Muskauer str. 19, 10997 Berlin, GERMANY, www.thoughtcrimerecords.de)

SANCTUM – "On the Horizon" CD

Fuck man, this shit is pretty damn good. Total trashy crust metal. If HIGH ON FIRE was a little bit faster and grew up on a steady diet on AMEBIX and BOLT THROWER. And I'll throw in VADER for good measure. The packaging is exceptional and includes two EPs as bonus tracks. I never bothered to listen to their split with STORMCROW because I disliked STORMCROW's live shows so much (way too fucking long, slow, and boring) but I'm glad I got this CD. Very worth your interest if you are even remotely into this genre of music. (JH)
(20 Buck Spin, PMB #136, 120 State Avenue NE, Olympia, WA 98501, www.20buckspin.com)

SEX/VID – "Nests" EP

This band is totally worthy of the weird, sudden cult-like standing they've achieved lately. The distorted, noisy chaos that comprises each song will make a believer out of even the most jaded asshole who thinks nothing good comes out these days. This repute can have its consequences, however, because trendy hipster approval destroys cool bands. Maybe I'm just resentful because their records go out-of-print as soon as they come out! This third EP shows some slight changes in the music, especially with the tender and uplifting (I'm joking) "Always Home," which, in sound, is practically an homage to BORN AGAINST. The other two tracks find the band settled into their own sound, so the constant VOID comparisons can be put to rest (though that great influence is still present). As always, the lyrics are just as powerful as the music. "Nests" is a dark metaphor of our society, and "Exorcism" is another feel-good tune for the kids ("this is hell, summon your useless priests"). Essential. (BG)
(Dom America, no address)

SHOOT IT UP – "Outta Control" EP

Spewing straight out of the diseased loins of Southern California—Long Beach to be exact—comes the fourth vinyl offering from SHOOT IT UP. Not as "rock" sounding as their previous releases, this one has much more of an ANGRY SAMOANS sound, and

appropriately retains the scumbag-ery that you'd expect from such a band. Is it garage rock bordering on hardcore, or hardcore bordering on garage? Who really cares, I guess. This is snotty, messy, and sloppy punk, made by problem children for problem children. Their best yet. (JU)
(Criminal IQ, 3501 N. Southport, Chicago, IL 60657, www.criminaliq.com)

SHORT CHANGED – "Burn Down Wagon Town" EP

Great eight-song debut 7" from this long standing Oakland band that has existed in various incarnations since the early part of this decade. SHORT CHANGED plays wicked, ramcharging hardcore that is reminiscent of SCURVY DOGS with caustic, scowling vocals and relentless speed. There's a marked simplicity to the songs but it actually works in their favor, similar to some of the crust records from the early '90s where the catchiness or memorable-ness of the songs is extended by their easy to follow steps and direct attack. A good recording with lyrics that are all over the map about everything from seeing *Star Wars* on LSD to living the punk life of being broke, coping and not coping with alcohol, violence at shows, and a Pyrate Punx anthem. Nice split on colored vinyl with absolutely insane front cover art—a grasshopper tank/sail boat/machine gun thing, ridden by a scantily clad pirate woman with a skull and an alligator skull with... oh just check it out for yourself. Numbered and limited out of 500.
(Pyrate Punx, www.pyratepunxrecords.com)

SHOTWELL – "Patriot" LP

If I worshipped at the altar of '90s Bay Area pop punk or championed the revival of sorts spearheaded by the likes SHANG-A-LANG or TULSA, then I'd have a boner right now that would shatter heaven. As it stands, I'm *more* than down to go along for the ride, and this is a record that'll get more than a few spins. 21 songs? That's a bit much. On *Patriot*, SHOTWELL plays some hits and misses, but mostly hits. The cover art is killer. This is good. (P$)
(Thrillhouse, 3422 Mission St, San Francisco, CA 94110, www.thrillhouserecords.com)

THE SKUDS – "Annihilation" LP

Eight tracks of solid enough crustcore from Augusta, Georgia that is reminiscent of Albuquerque '90s hardcore a la LOGICAL NONSENSE or WORD SALAD, though cornered with more straight up heavy metal type long-ish song structures or all out screeching-thrash-throttle at points. A decent recording done at the Jam Room coupled with dire cover art of illustrated gas masks, babies, and bombs. The lyrics touch on topics from the same viewpoint of any crust record in the last fifteen-to-twenty years: anti-religion, anti-system, anti-nuclear war. This record is fine as entertainment and a fun listen, but you have to wonder at what point these things have been copied so much that they no longer resemble the original intent, feel, meaning and/or point? When you're just stating facts and copying other people's ideas it doesn't count as "political" in any way. "Nuclear testing in the country side?" When? You can Google in the matter of a second to find out that the last atmospheric nuclear test was done in the continental US in 1962 (or underground tests in 1993)! It's not that I don't like or support music like this. I'm at a point when I have to demand better. As a fan, listener, or band, mimicry cheapens the whole thing. There's serious deep shit going on in the world right now, and it often seems that the best the crust community (one of the last bastions of punk with any sort of political conscience or trappings) can seemingly come up with, when they take the time to put down their Miller Lites, is that God sucks, and nuclear war and the system are bad. WTF? Grandiose packaging with a gatefold full of party pix, printed lyric inner sleeve. and a patch. Limited to 999 copies. (KS)
(Machinery of Hate, c/o Karlos Flores, Paseo Durazno 14 INF, Paseo Residential, Matamoros, Tamaulipas, CP 87380 MEXICO)

SLAB CITY – "Friday Nite Boy" EP

Ever wonder what it would sound like to get the beat down by a bunch of "suicidals" at a SPITS show? Wonder no longer. The singer has the same screaming, spitting anger and confusion I felt when I saw how many *Maximum* staff members had NOFX on their "Best of NorCal" lists last month. (JP)
(Rob's House, www.robshouserecords.com)

SLEEPWALKERS R.I.P. – "Young and Old/Life or Death"

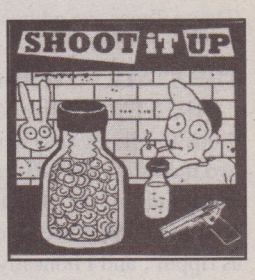
Here's the exciting second 7" from these ex-TRIGGERS Portland-based ragers. Great gritty sound with fuzzed-out guitars, angry plaintive wailing, and sweet catchy bass lines anchor it all together. The layers of echo-y fuzz that would usually be distracting give this recording an incredible dark, and disoriented feel. Can't wait for more. (AA)
(Hovercraft, 300 NW 8th Ave. #401, Portland, OR 97209. www.hovercraftpdx.com)

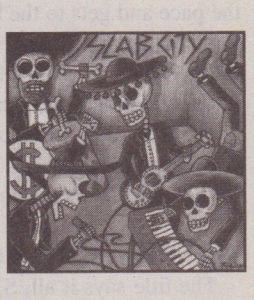
SNAKEFLOWER 2 – "Talk About It/Running From The Night"

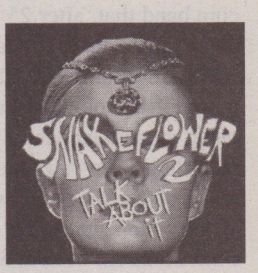
A late '60s groove permeates the sound and SNAKEFLOWER 2 mixes it with minimal and raw, but not bleeding, production. The dance floor effect hits the red, taking in a heavy dose of handclapped-inspired ROLLING STONES thunder and a slight smell of THE STROKES. "Running From the Night" gets all moody and menacing, more dirty and threatening with enough darkness to wipe the tiles clean of all the skinny pants hipsters drawn to the bright lights of the flip. I'll be looking out for more. (SD)
(Tic Tac Totally, PO Box 558383, Chicago, IL 60655-8383)

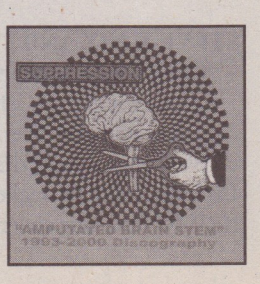
SOLVENT ABUSE – "Glue Kills Demos" LP

17 songs from the obscure early-'80s Nottigham punk band SOLVENT ABUSE. The songs range in quality,









but there are some definite gems in here. It's the stripped down angry D-beat you crave, with trade-off male/female vocals. Kind of HONEY BANE meets DISCHARGE—classic punk anthems of a lost classic punk band. The thick insert booklet has some amazing photos of the young flamingo haired punx, with old art and flyers—it's pretty fucking rad. Demo Tapes does it again and again… (AA)
(Demo Tapes, no address)

THE STATE – "Verboten" EP

THE STATE delivers a pretty cool record. Props for diving into new territory, as they do two tracks in Deutsch and the opener definitely reminds me of '80s Deutsch punk, which is pretty fucking killer. The English songs aren't as rippin', and I honestly can't say why. Track one on side two "Gassengesindel" picks up the pace and gets to the bands roots by sounding a bit like their early work, which is fine by me. I wish the production was a bit dirtier which would have given the slower songs the punch I felt they were lacking. Overall. Pretty cool "Spiekburger!!!!!" kills! (MS)
(Statement , www.statenoillusions.com)

STENCH – "Cult Status" LP

The title says it all. STENCH was a snotty, beer-soaked '80s "I don't give a fuck" hardcore band that, after 25 years of punk history, has attained the cult status of bands such as APPENDIX and PEGGIO PUNX. This is way more UK82 sounding than either of the previously mentioned bands, and in the case of this recording it is raw and not as produced as many of the bands that where huge in the UK at the time. That is by no means to say that *Cult Status* isn't worth every penny in postage though. STENCH deserves a place in the history books. They where every bit as good as ANTISOCIAL or BLITZKRIEG, in fact, I do believe, in a lot of respects, their musicianship was above both of those bands. The titles of the songs are all pisstakes which leads me to believe that these punx where the real thing in their day. If you love the UK punk sound of Riot City and Secret Records, THE STENCH could become your new crack. Where have all the glueheads gone? (WK)
(Pure Punk, www.purepunk.it)

STEVE E NIX AND THE CUTE LEPERS – "Can't Stand Modern Music" LP

Lame or not, I can't lie, I wish I could, but the cover wins me over. One of the best mod revival songs ever, THE CIRCLES "Opening Up" just can't be fucked. Unfortunately, for BRIEFS fans, one cover does not a full album make, and actually it barely makes anything accept for an annoying as hell cover band. Anyhow, STEVE E NIX AND THE CUTE LEPERS is obviously Steve E Nix from the BRIEFS and a revolving cast of characters , which sometimes consists of both Steve Kicks and Chris Brief who were also in the BRIEFS. Songs with perfect names like "Nervous Habits." "Terminal Boredom," and "So Screwed Up," which do little to hide the simple, clean, re-production of the classic power pop sound. There is no soul here—it's all totally noodle-y, limp, painting by numbers power pop on this album. THE CIRCLES song is great though. (AL)
(1-2-3-4 Go!, www.1234gorecords.com)

SUICIDAL TENDENCIES – "1982 Demos" LP

The first SUICIDAL TENDENCIES cassette on Frontier has the lifelong honor of being my "first punk tape," and it got *a lot* of play before becoming the victim of spilled Dr. Pepper. Nostalgia aside, I was excited to hear this, but unfortunately, I find the vinyl release of their early demos to be largely unnecessary. The first eight songs *rage*—the guitar sound here is perfectly harsh and trebly and makes the familiar versions sound tired. The rest of this LP is instrumental and some of the songs are raw to the point of being unlistenable. If this were a 7" containing only the first eight songs I'd consider buying it, but as it stands it's garbage cluttering up the racks. (CI)
(bootleg)

SUNPOWER – "Pain for Profit" LP

From Belgium, this band plays a style that is totally early-'80s California punk. They've got the speed of CIRCLE JERKS fused with the rocking, surf guitar sound of DEAD KENNEDYS. There are some pretty cliché punk lyrics however. With songs like "Bored Generation" and "Gonna Cut Myself" it's as if they sampled from the ADOLECENTS lyric insert. Besides that, this is definitely worth checking out. (PL)
(Holy Shit!, www.myspace.comholyshittrash)

SUPPRESSION – "Amputated Brain Stem 1993-2000 Discography" CD

Noisecore. Well, grindcore with a ton of samples and a bunch of noise tracks thrown in. One of those bands that successfully mixes noisy raw grindcore and full on noise. These guys have been around forever with forever being defined as any punk, hardcore, or grindcore band that's been around more than ten years. This CD collects a ton of 7", split 7", and comp tracks. 64 songs in all, including tracks from *BBBBLLLLEEEEAAAAUUUURRRRGGGGHH*, *Cry Now, Cry Later*, and splits with GRIEF, DESPISE YOU, CRIPPLE BASTARDS, and many others. (MH)
(CNP, www.cnprecords.com)

TEACHER'S PET – CD

TEACHER'S PET released one single in 1978. The A-side, "Hooked on You," is included on this collection, but the B-side, "To Kill You," is not. Lame. I know there is probably some fantastic excuse (i.e. the label or someone else is reissuing the single later) for not including it here. So, instead you get stuck with some live recordings of some covers. The umpteenth version of "Summertime Blues" anyone? Alas. Anyway, TEACHER'S PET is one of those bands raised on '70s hard rock who finds their calling when punk starts. Then they added a new-wave-ish keyboard to their band or something like that. "Hooked on You" is a wildly catchy song as are some of the eleven unreleased studio tracks like "Cincinnati Stomp" and "Fast Food Baby." Maybe not the best of the early punk scene, but definitely worth listening to. The CD also includes five videos of the band filmed in the college TV station. The quality isn't the best, but the performances are priceless. (CK)
(Smog Veil, 1658 N. Milwaukee Ave. #284, Chicago, IL 60647, smogveil@mac.com)

TITLE FIGHT – "Kingston" EP

Melodic hardcore from Pennsylvania that's influenced by LIFETIME and SAVES THE DAY. There's plenty of tempo changes and urgent emotional vocals. Nothing really to hang your hat on though. The flipside is a little faster and rugged, but still doesn't do it for me. (AD)
(Attic, PO Box 274, Plumsteadville, PA 18949)

TITMACHINE – "I Wanna Be Your Dog/Schneller"

You cannot go wrong with four cute girls from the Netherlands that call themselves TITMACHINE and cover The STOOGES, right? Well, of course you could, but this is indeed totally rad. The cover of the most covered STOOGES song is a gritty but pretty rendition. It's monotone, straightforward, & repetitive. The keyboard may as well be a metronome and the Dutch accents singing in English add to the monotone vibe. The bass and the guitar seem to be out of tune with one another to give it that nice shitty sound that pleases my ears. The "right"-side (AKA the B-side) of the single starts with a few notes being strummed on guitar and bass with angry

sounding vocals in German—the best angry sounding language there is. After a minute of the voice becoming more angry, the band kicks in jamming on one note for thirty-seconds while the vocals turn to screams and, appropriately, the song ends. The minute long "Schneller" and STOOGES cover make one want to hear more from the band, but I think this single gives enough insight to assume TITMACHINE won't sag for years. (MU)
(Meeuw Muzak, www.meeuw.net)

TRIGGER EFFECT – "Dare to Ride the Heliocraft" CD

There is a horrible song title on Montreal, Canada's TRIGGER EFFECT's re-released debut album called "Pop Niggaz Like Balloons" which I suppose is meant to be taken with a grain of salt, but I don't find it funny. And really I don't find the band particularly good enough (at all) to come up with a good excuse for the existence of that song or for them. (AL)
(Signed By Force, www.signedbyforce.com)

TROPHY WIVES – "In Heat" CD

Worse than CJ Ramone. (JP)
(Jew-Venile, www.myspace.com/trophywivesmusic)

THE UNDESIRABLES / THE WAY BACK – split LP

THE WAYBACK has hints of modern gritty pop punk in its sound—a bit of discord (not the label) in the guitar riffs, wandering bass lines that at times have a "spy movie theme-song" feel—but the vocals, which are a nasally "singing"-style keep it from being easily pigeonholed. All in all, this is just lo-fi and somewhat "raw" indie-rock. Pass. THE UNDESIRABLES, on the flip, have a lot of the same attributes only the vocals are way more screamy with occasional quiet singing parts much like early I HATE MYSELF, without the annoying dramatic nature of that band. This record is really not my thing. But, if it was my thing, I know for a fact that neither band does their respective style justice. (JU)
(Twin Propeller, twinpropeller@hotmail.com)

WAR/SYSTEM – "Incoming!" EP

Two long tracks from this UK band, which features the vocalist of TERRORAIN. These mid-tempo crust tunes crush in the direction of a drawn out *Cybergod*-era Nausea with some rock flourishes. It's also similar to NAUSEA with its upfront large recording and monstrous drum sound. The gruff vocals are done in a blunt RIPCORD/OI POLLOI style. There's some slightly more intricate metallic quirkiness to the pondering lumber, but it's broken up by interspersed bursts of fast thrashing. The songs titles spit out with enough repetitive snarl for jump-on-stage-grab-the mike-shout-it-stage-dive back-in-the-audience ability. Neat debut, apparently limited to 300, though the packaging is a minimal thanks list, band picture, and a few scanned photos and images. I wish more care was put into taking the images further and printing the lyrics to complement the killer music! (KS)
(Distort Worcester, nohopenofuture@hotmail.co.uk)

WARZONE – "Demos" LP

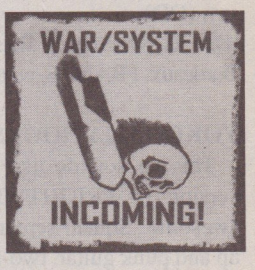
WARZONE is probably the most (unintentionally) hilarious NYHC band—for reference, listen to "Intro Bust," or "Back to School Again," or "Locked Out," or better yet, read the thanks list on the CD of the first two albums (both God and Drew Barrymore make an appearance). The humor is for the most part absent from this bootleg LP, which features a 1984 demo with Tommy Rat (later of TRIP 6 and REJUVENATE) on vocals and a 1986 demo with the inimitable Raybeez, the true troop leader of this "boy scout HC" act. The nine songs on the former demo, most of which are otherwise unreleased, show the band in its way early stages, barely recognizable even from the *Don't Forget the Struggle*-era incarnation due to the gnarly vox and rudimentary (to put it mildly) musicianship. If you can look beyond the shortcomings in the production—it is a demo, after all—the material here is surprisingly solid proto-NYHC. The track "Not This Time" is a good one in particular, with a killer, raw bass sound and plodding tempo. The second demo is made up mainly of rougher version of songs that would later appear on vinyl ("We're the Crew," "As One," "Under 18," "In the Mirror," etc.), plus a cover of 7 SECONDS' "Young 'Til I Die." The typical hallmarks of a carelessly assembled bootleg are all present: typos, inaccuracies, clip-art cover, etc. Apparently an official release of at least the earlier demo is in the works, so if you're considering checking this out, I suggest waiting for the real deal. (CS)
(bootleg)

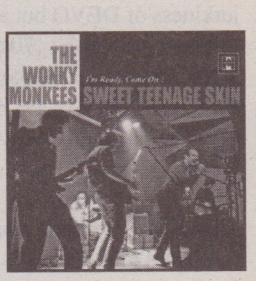
THE WEAKENDS – "Death Ride/Small Towns"

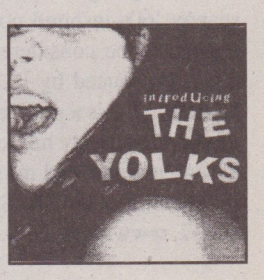
"Small Towns" uses a swampy, hypnotic beat that gets across the boredom of small towns (though I don't think that was intended: it sounds as though the singer is saying about small towns being his favorite place to something or other—to go? To ghost?), without being the least boring to listen to. "Death Ride" is a more uptempo example of garage scuzz, also real good. (DD)
(Rob's House, www.robshouserecords.com)

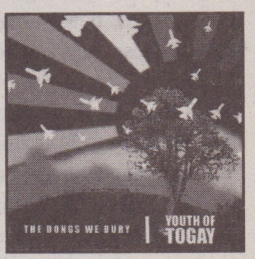
WILDEBEESTS – "Pointless/One & One"

Wait, I've heard this song before; I think it was on a single I picked up at one of those Las Vegas Grind events a few years ago. These guys fucking tore the place up that night! "One & One" is one of the catchiest tracks these cats have done, and it was a special release limited to the event, so surely that justifies a reissue. Total '60s-inspired garage stomp that is mandatory for anyone who digs rock 'n' roll done in the THANES or MILKSHAKES way at its fiercest. The new flipside track might be just as good. Seriously, "Pointless" is a crazy instrumental with fantastic guitar work that's guaranteed to fuck up your cheap little speakers. This just may be the closest these punks come to psychedelic. Two killer songs from a killer band. (BG)
(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504, www.slovenly.com)









WONKY MONKEES – "Sweet Teenage Skin/I'm Ready, Come on!"

Self-styled "orchestre approximativiste de Punk-Soul-Garage" with *un soupcon* of rawk thrown in, from Bordeaux (so you know what sort of vin properly accompanies this disc) with twin guitar attack. Gotta admire any band with a back cover photo featuring an audience member in the front row plugging his ears. "Vive la vie et le rock 'n' roll," just like they say. (DD)

(Double Veheme, 3 Rue Tombe l'Oly, 33000 Bordeaux, FRANCE, wonkymonkees@yahoo.fr)

YOKOHAMA HOOKS – "Turn On" EP

This so sounds like a more disco-garage version of FRIGHTWIG, which is totally awesome. Squeal-scream girl vocals, fuzzed up and punk guitar, two-note bass lines, slightly disco drums. Hints of the new-wave herky-jerkiness of DEVO but at the same time all the dirt and grit of the '70s/'80s LA punk scene. They're from Spokane? That's unexpected. Fun times. (MM)

(Tic Tac Totally, PO Box 558383, Chicago, IL 60655)

YOLKS – "Introducing" EP

What a month!!! This is surprise of the year for me. I was expecting some feedback drenched garage slop, but instead I got super snappy '60s-inspired pop. It's raw and rough enough to be considered "garage," but is as much influenced by BUDDY HOLLY as the SEEDS. This is a repress I believe, so a bunch of you are already hip to these cats—I'm new to 'em, and just had my mind blown!! (TB)

(Criminal IQ, 3501 N. Southport, Chicago, IL 60657, www.criminaliq.com)

LOS YORK'S – "El Viaje: 1966-1974" LP

A very well put together overview of one of Peru's best beat/garage/psych bands (best known these days outside of Peru for "Pronto El Doctor" from the *Yorks 67* LP). One of those rare bands of the time to succumb to the post rock 'n' roll paradigm without becoming uninteresting (though I could have done without the cover of "Sunshine of Your Love" included herein), this is a good introduction (not as good as the re-ish of *Yorks 67* though) and the inclusion of a handful of non-LP tracks makes this worthwhile for even those who have the three LPs on one format or another. (DD)

(Munster, www.munster-records.com)

YOUTH OF TOGAY – "The Dongs We Bury" EP

I was faced with a slight dilemma when I got this record to review. I knew of the band and what they are about. Growing up in the youth crew shit and being a punk homo I have seen first hand how homophobic and elitist that scene was(is?). At first, I found this band/record to be a stupid ongoing joke at real gay punks' expense, as it seems like this is a record released for straight guys to find funny and/or slightly entertaining. But I've researched this for a bit and Pat (the singer, principal writer) does say that he is bisexual. Does it really matter? Well no, but when you sing about taking cocks in the ass or sucking dicks and never going back, I find it a bit fake as fuck and a little insulting if you really don't or just might be "curious." Get off the fucking fence and don't cop out. If you label yourself as "queercore" you better put up or shut the fuck up. On the same token, Pat does contribute sales of the record to educate issues of homophobia and gay and straight relationships in schools in MA, which I think is super fucking awesome. And I do think he is trying to break down the barriers of the hardcore scene and make it more fun than stone-hard serious and ridiculous, as it has become. So, I give him credit for that. So I'll try to not make this a long and drawn out deal. Overall, I do think it's a pretty good record, despite all the bullshit around it. The songs are all solid and well done and would recommend it for a couple of listens. Mind you, they are no LIMP WRIST by any stretch of the imagination. If you can find it, pick it up, as of now it is out of print. I do have one thing to say…a gigantic *fuck you* to HAVE HEART for first of all being a third-rate suck-ass "hardcore" band, and second for not having a sense of humor towards someone who likes you enough to parody one of your boring ass songs and to Bridge Nine for their disappointing actions against a novelty record. Come on guys, leave that major label rock star bullshit at the door, this is punk rock. And if you don't know what I'm talking about check out the story behind this record, which you should do anyhow. Blah blah blah, Um, what's next girl? (JH)

(FNS, www.fnsrecords.com)

V/A – "El Libertario" CD

A 32-band international compilation CD benefiting the *El Libertario* anarchist collective and newspaper in Caracas, Venezuela. Features the bands ISKRA, DISRESPECT, NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR, DONA MALDAD, APATIA NO, AUKTION, and many, many more. Mostly heavier crusty bands, but there are some surprises (in the form of French hip-hop). A lot of songs from good bands that benefits a worthy cause. Oh, and a super thick booklet with political articles in both English and Spanish. Very cool. (AA)

(Fight For your Mind, www.f-f-y-m.org)

V/A – "Small Pool Records 4-Way Split" LP

This record came out like seven or eight months ago and *MRR* has just now finally acquired it. I blame Matty for the lateness of this review. I also placed this record in my year-end top ten, so you can imagine I like it a lot. What you have here is a compilation of four bands (NO PEOPLE, UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND, DRINKERS PURGATORY, OFF WITH THEIR HEADS) each doing four songs, and it all kicks ass. The record starts off with tracks from Tokyo's NO PEOPLE, who in this recording sound like THE QUEERS and PINHEAD GUNPOWDER. The UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND songs all appear on *Bird Roughs*, put out on Recess Records, but they are earlier recordings, before they had a keyboard player. They sound a bit different; I like some songs better than the full-length versions, but not others. All the songs are totally amazing. DRINKERS PURGATORY takes a lot of influence from their friends KILLER DREAMER and FYP. Lastly, OFF WITH THEIR HEADS ends the LP with a few of their better songs. For those unfamiliar with OFF WITH THEIR HEADS, they play a style of music heavily influenced by DILLINGER FOUR, but with a TOYS THAT KILL amount of poppiness. As for the record as a whole, I think it's amazing. The four-band split LP really works with these bands. All four bands are noticeably different but have an easy cross over appeal. If you like one band you'll probably like them all. And there's no filler or throwaway tracks on here. Rad from start to finish. (FS)

(Small Pool, www.smallpoolrecords.com)

V/A – "The World's Lousy With Ideas 4" EP

It used to be quite common to see 7" compilations with four or five bands on them (especially in Britain) not so much these days though. This comp comes with absolutely zero info save for the track-listing, so, I'm not even sure were these band's come from or when this was recorded. The music's rough and ready, up-beat garage-y punk with a lo-fi DIY lean. The four bands featured are TOUCHED, COCONUT COOLOUTS, EL VICIO, and FAG COP. The whole thing is over in minutes, leaving not a whole lot that sticks in the mind—it's not bad, just nothing memorable though. (AD)

(Almost Ready, Box 4034, Atttleboro, MA 02703)

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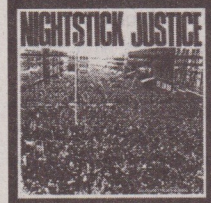

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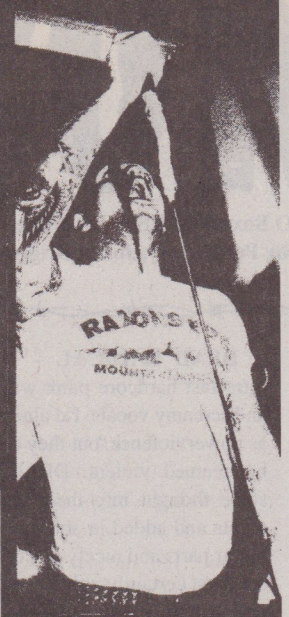

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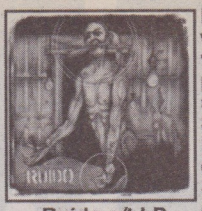

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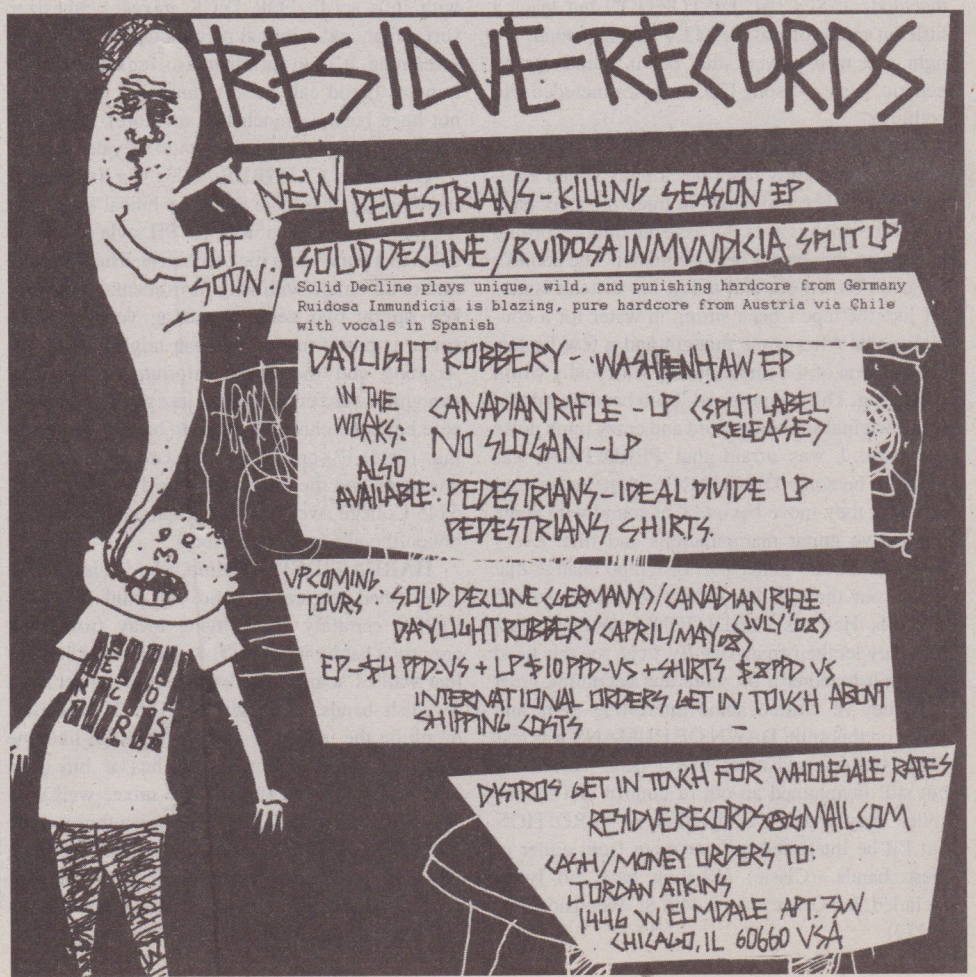

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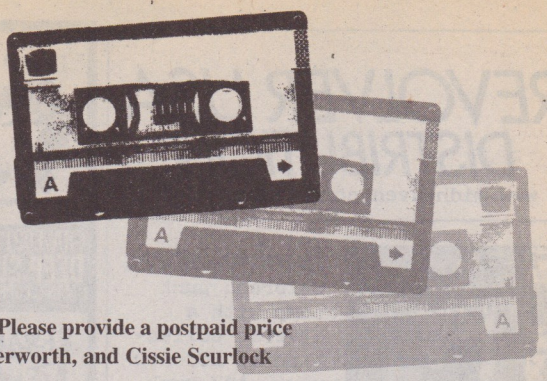

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Peter Avery, Justin Briggs, Eric Butterworth, and Cissie Scurlock

ACEPHALIX – The acoustic intro doom that opens up this demo pretty much sets the stage for what's to come. This is heavy music that has as much in common with bands like WRECKING CREW, RAW DEAL, and CRO-MAGS as it does DOOM. This band is the perfect mix of breakdown filled NYHC and crust. I guess a NAUSEA comparison is truly in order due to the trade-off male/female vocals (both of which sound great!), but I never really liked that band and this rips. Equally killer all three times that I saw them. I have been anticipating this one. (Justin) (5-song cassette, lyrics included. no address but if you contact me, I'll see what I can dig up.)

AL SHIRE & THE HENCHMEN – While you may think that adding a horn section to a "melodic hardcore" band may be new and interesting; in fact it just makes it more annoying. The band plays rather slick sounding, up-tempo punk that nods at SOCIAL DISTORTION but leans a little bit more toward the MTV "punk" sound. It's tight and well played stuff but it sounds pretty generic. (Pete) (4-song CD, no lyrics included. No nothing)

DAWN OF HUMANS / PERDITION split – Almost every shitty town has a punk sound engineer that will record bands in trade for a six pack or $100, which makes the ass-sounding recording quality on this tape a head-scratcher. The sound's not even blown out and noisy, but instead comes off like the tape's been sitting in water for a couple weeks. After some thought and a few listens, the question of the sound quality isn't really worth pondering. This tape is good. Both bands lay down some original sounding, wild and crazy punk noise nonsense. I was afraid that PERDITION was going to be some DISCHARGE clone noise-core band but they move beyond that sound with some impressive guitar manipulations and fills. Every song has an odd guitar part or tempo change that stands out through the otherwise muddy sound. "This Is Hell" is PERDITION's standout track 'cos they let their freak flag fly. I can see this band getting it together a bit more and becoming great 'cos they've written some interesting parts and songs on this split. DAWN OF HUMANS was less DISCHARGE and more like a faster AMEBIX, but still maintained an out of control and unique style. They weren't as dynamic as PERDITION but I'd be interested to hear more from either of these bands. (Cissie) (12-song tape, no lyrics included. Ian Grave, 48-53 44th St, Woodside, NY 11377)

DEAD RADICAL – These Floridians play ultra fast hardcore punk with crazy time changes and screamy vocals. I'd almost even describe them as powerviolence, but they are a little too quirky to be deemed violent. DEAD RADICAL has put some thought into their scattered song arrangements and added in some nice texture with weird guitar parts and nicely placed backup vocals. They are most certainly unlike anything that I've recently heard but are undeniably reminiscent of the mid '90s. The drums are way too loud in the mix but overall this was a cool and different listen. It comes with a sticker and a neat booklet that even fits inside the tape case. (Cissie) (9-song tape, lyrics included, $5ppd. Drugged Conscience, 5140 Tamarind Ridge Dr, Naples, FL 34119, www.druggedconscience.com)

FOR DICK – It's like Sam McPheeters recording songs for Joe Meek, jumbled screaming mixed with '60s sci-fi. FOR DICK mixes synthesizer, surf guitar, and minimal percussion with distorted screaming. It's fun stuff that lasts for less than four minutes (good call because anything longer may not have been so much fun anymore). (Pete) (4-song CD, lyrics included. p.watt43@yahoo.com)

GENESIS CLIMBER – This is a live recording of sludgy hardcore with a technical aspect but it's more of a rock 'n' roll, RUSH style of technical than a punk/math rock technical. The songs are mid to up-tempo with long instrumental parts broken up by two deep screaming vocalists. The sound is pretty muddy but that might just be the recoding and the tape. Unfortunately, it's not straightforward enough to be just good plain hardcore but not technical enough to be really interesting. (Pete) (?-song tape—it's hard to tell where one stops and the other starts, no lyrics included. 5245 College Ave, Box 441, Oakland, CA 94618, noneofthemknew@yahoo.com)

HÅRDA TIDER – Malmo, Sweden is officially a hotbed of great hardcore and punk. HÅRDA TIDER certainly isn't shying away from their country's hardcore roots. This demo recording has that wall of sound that I've come to expect from Swedish bands, although HÅRDA TIDER isn't drunk on the influence of DISCHARGE like one would assume. Their sound has a bit of a thug/SXE vibe that surprisingly mixes well with the standard Swedish fare. They even throw some CRO MAGS riffs into the mix!?! Here's hoping this high quality demo ensures an even more ripping vinyl release. (Cissie) (5-song tape, lyrics included, $7ppd. hardatider@riseup.net)

HUMAN ADULT BAND – If you can imagine Peter Murphy sitting around all day, getting stoned and recording on a 4-track then you don't really have to continue reading. The band plays dark, droning, lo-fi songs that have tons feedback and heavy echo on the deep vocals. While this may sound tiresome at first, as the hour long CD goes on, the whole thing becomes more enjoyable but possibly better as background music more than anything else. (Pete) (19-song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 901, New Brunswick, NJ 08903)

JOHN WALSH – This is the most ridiculously positive hardcore band ever. My favorite exchange between the lead and backup vocals being, "Hey man, how're you doing?" "We're doing great!" "That's fine". Musically they play straightforward, fast, power chord loving, hardcore that's a little more GORILLA BISCUITS than Epitaph style "melodic hardcore". Covering "You're the Best" was definitely the right call. (Pete) (6-song CD, lyrics included, $2 ppd. 515 St. Thomas Ct., Fairfield, OH 45014, americasmostpositive@gmail.com)

NASTY INTENTIONS – These fools come from Brooklyn (which boosts their "good band tally" to hmm 3 bands?). This has got everything that makes a demo great: it's a tape, includes a kick ass lyric sheet, and they recorded in their basement by themselves. As a plus, they've included thoughtful packaging... Oh ya, and the music is good too. I don't want to ruin this demo with vague comparisons to bands that they don't really sound like so I'll just say its got the Butterworth seal of approval. What puts NASTY INTENTIONS a cut above the other billions of bands out there is the vocals, two thumbs up, Joe! Do yourself a favor and pick this up. (Eric) (10-song tape, lyrics included. 131 Tompkins Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11206)

NO MAN'S SLAVE – Okay, so beyond being an annoyingly obvious tribute, this is really good. The music isn't actually a complete INFEST clone, but it's not that far off either. Well, it's also obviously not as ripping, but this is still your basic mind-melting powerviolence hardcore done in a very traditional way and done well. Fiends of the style should for sure look into this. (Justin) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, $4ppd US, $7ppd world. Ross, 709 NW 35th, Oklahoma City, OK 73118, paddackviolence@gmail.com)

THE OILSNAKES – Musically, I would have to say that this doesn't really qualify as punk but

the fact that I like the packaging and they threw in a bunch of pictures just won me over. THE OIL-SNAKES play spacey goth music with synth, some piano, lots of noise, a drum machine every once in a while and a number of other instruments. The chanting vocals are given this creepy feeling by the tons of reverb, and they sit way in the back. While it's kind of cool stuff, I wouldn't recommend this for the punx. (Pete) (17-song CD, no lyrics included. 6615 Owl Tree, Fort Wayne, IN 46825, motoroil101@hotmail.com)

PRETTY WHORES OF MANHATTAN This is four short songs of hyper rock 'n' roll. It's like a punkier version of AC/DC with a driving rhythm section, jerky guitars, and snotty vocals. The recording and production sound pretty good though the lack of low-end on the bass is a bit annoying. On the whole it's not bad but it does smell a bit like modern alternative rock. (Pete) (4-song CD, lyrics included. Storgatan 9, Lomma 23431, Sweden, pretty.whores.of.manhattan@hotmail.com)

RELIGIOUS SS DISORDER – According to the title, this is the second demo tape by this Michigan band. The music is basic semi-melodic punk that sometimes borders on hardcore. RELIGIOUS SS DISORDER curiously borrows lyrics from JAWBREAKER and TRACY CHAPMAN, although they sound nothing like either. Unfortunately, every song has the same drumbeat and the riffs become indistinct after awhile, which causes the songs to blend from one to the next. The vocals also fall into the trap of following the rhythm so closely that they become monotonous after a bit. I hear a few neat parts here and there and their hearts are in the right place, so maybe demo three will be their ticket. (Cissie) (9-song tape, lyrics included, PO Box 1148, Grand Rapids, MI 49501)

SCHOOL JERKS – These Canadian folks are heavily mining the same territory as REGULATIONS and their ilk. I like this better than REGULATIONS, even though I wish the blatant attempts at repeating the past would stop. It's OK to be inspired by BLACK FLAG, but to *outright steal* their music and lyrics is absurd. Not only that but it makes these bands look like fools 'cos only an elite few can live up to the power of BLACK FLAG ('specially the early shit). I would also like to point out that distortion and sustain are good options to consider when coming up with your hardcore guitar sound. OK, I didn't mean to make an example out of SCHOOL JERKS. It should definitely be noted that these songs are good. The vocals are super cool and raw sounding reminding me of early POISON IDEA at times, and SCHOOL JERKS has some talent. I just hope they graduate from the throwback ghetto soon and offer something relevant to the world of punk. (Cissie) (5-song tape, no lyrics included, 68 Crawford St, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6J 2V2, schooljerks@gmail.com)

SOCIAL TREASON – SOCIAL TREASON plays straightforward hardcore with a bit of metal influence. It's in the vein of POISON IDEA, with fast drumming, power chords (with an occasional wank thrown in) and screaming vocals that are broken up by typical chugging breakdowns. (Pete) (12-song CD, lyrics included, $10 ppd. PO Box 12262, Huntsville, AL 35835, Socialtreason@hotmail.com)

SPECIAL PATROL GROUP – I coulda sworn that this band was gonna be from the UK—the vocalist seems to have a English accent, but according to their Myspace, they're from NJ/PA. Due to that fact, this band reminds me of HERESY. Think fast/almost blurry blasting hardcore with two-degrees of separation from early '80s Boston bands. Aces! (Justin) ($3ppd, 4-song cassette, no lyrics included. bleedingxedge@gmail.com)

VILE – These guys are making the best of Central California. Chaotic, gruff vocals but in a punk/hc way, and not so much tough guy. Slower struttin' almost BLACK SABBATH parts accompanied with fast hardcore riffs. The drug-induced artwork on this well packaged demo is cool. It comes with stickers and buttons. (Eric) (4-song, lyrics included, $7 ppd. PO Box 3065. Visalia, CA 93278, wastethroughtime@yahoo.com)

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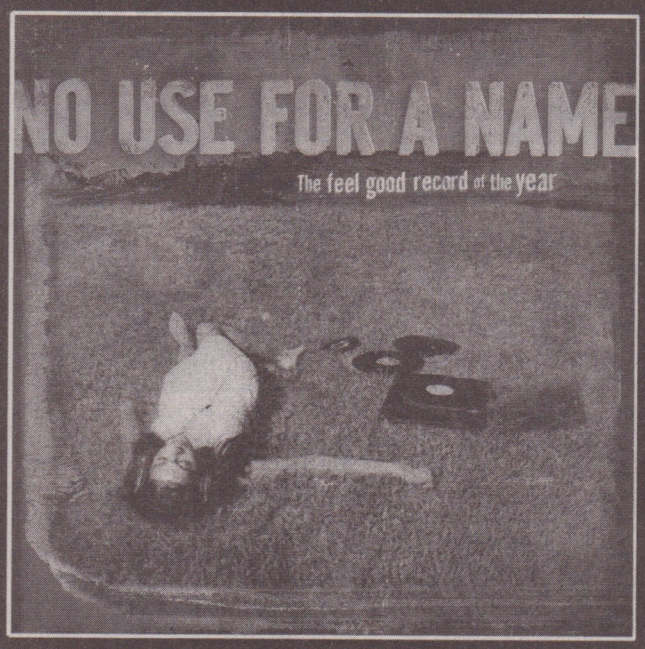

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ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(JD) Judy Balmin
(JB) Julia Booze
(JU) Justin Briggs
(BG) Bob Goldie
(CH) Cassie Harwood
(MJ) Meredith Jones
(NM) Nick Mangel
(JM) Jeff Mason
(SM) Scott Miller
(MP) Mason Pince
(CR) Casey Ress
(CI) Cissie Scurlock
(DS) Dionne Stevens

ANARCHY #65 / $4.95
10.5 x 8 – printed – 79 pgs
Honestly, I am still not finished reading every word of this Berkeley baby. I'm now realizing that I haven't even read enough of the material and histories referenced within the text to digest, then serve, my own little interpretive anecdote. What I can say is this; *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed* is a great resource for scholarly anarcho-demics or a novice like me. Actually, a person completely in the dark about the actual depths of anarchist philosophy might be overwhelmed by the strong and seemingly informed opinions inside; regardless, one can learn a lot from a single issue—be they suggested readings or straightforward essays like "Anti-imperialism or Anti-capitalism." The book reviews are always a good place to start. Derrick Jensen's popular two-part work is analyzed but that is only one tiny example. *Anarchy* is so much to think about, so much to do. Reading this could assist a random do-gooder to living in a better direction, or encourage countless others to join in the fight, with a clearer understanding of struggles past and present. Some may even be repelled by the complexity of the concept. This will definitely end up in the magazine rack where I work. These ideas shall become integrated with the tabloids and fashion rags. Anarchist literature improves lives, although at times it's too *smart* for the dipshits. However, punks everywhere can stand to do a little homework on this controversial subject that we hold so dear, without even properly understanding. (DS)
C.A.L. Press / PO Box 3448 / Berkeley, CA 94703

BLACK LESBIAN PRESIDENT?! #4 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 58 pages
This is a totally cool little punk zine from Wales. Well laid out and packed with pages of good shit to read and fairly clear photos. There is a nice article on taking care of the environment and steps we can take on a personal level to make things better and an extremely detailed summary of the editor's trip to Gainesville to see The Fest 6. There is (a long) interview with Lemuria, Blackbeard and non-profit record store Wayward Council. The zine rounds itself out with some record and zine reviews. All in all good read. (SM)
14 Spring Gardens Terrace / Cardiff, GF241QX / WALES

COMMUNICATING VESSELS #19 / $3
7 x 8.5 – printed – 56 pgs
There is some radical political stuff in here, along with art and literary material. I'm unenthused about the latter—critiques of art museums, a Kenneth Rexroth piece from 1960, poetry and a short play. But, a lot of times I can't even read this stuff, and the pieces in here at least held my attention. Of more interest to me is the look at distribution problems for small publishers in the wake of the demise of the IPA (a magazine distributor), though this article is short on solutions. A longer piece attacks leftist sympathies for Hamas and Hezbollah. This article is long on historical context, and, I feel, righteous in its conclusions. A writer reports on the risky maneuver of reporting for jury duty, then telling the judge you don't believe in the system. It's better just to not receive their summons, as many things get lost in the mail, you know what I'm sayin'? There are no reviews and few ads. The layout is simple but nice, with old-timey illustrations and some cartoons. I don't feel this zine would appeal to too many *MRR* readers, but it's pretty good at what it aims to be. (JM)
3527 NE 15th Avenue, #127 / Portland, OR 97212

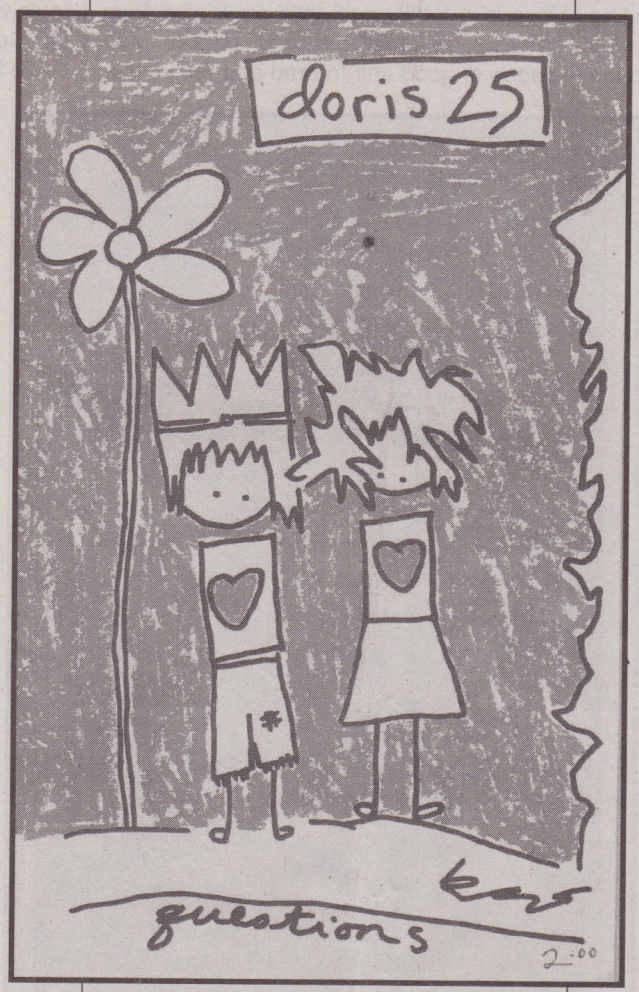
CRAMHOLE #2 / $3
8.5 x 7 – copied – 36 pgs
Quite a nice compilation of decent art and

interesting stories are presented in this issue of *Cramhole*. Included are a retrospective of crappy jobs worked, a few sequences illustrating the pitfalls of working in a record store, and a couple of slice-o-life vignettes. Very readable and well made—except for the collating problem that my copy had that caused a page to be printed twice. Overall, a good read. (CR)
2244 E. 17th St. / Tucson, AZ 85719
cramholethecomic@hotmail.com

DOG DAYZ – THE SUMMER OF GLASS #2 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 20 pgs.
This is part-two of a series of comics by Fly, whose regular contributions of profile-comics with anecdotal accompaniment regularly grace the pages of this magazine. This is the illustrated and narrated story of K9 — a squatter in NYC's Lower East Side circa '93, and the trouble she gets herself into and out of (cops, boys, crappy anarchist conventions, trainhopping apprehension). Best read in the kind of extreme heat where the sun practically grabs you up and wrings the sweat out of 'ya. (CH)
Fly / PO Box 1318 / Cooper Station / NYC, NY 10276
www.bway.net/~fly

DORIS #25 / $2 & 2 stamps
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 30 pgs
As a longtime Doris lover, it is really easy to give applause to the most recent issue. This time Cindy moves on with a "Questions" issue, where she answers questions that have been posed to her from different sources, which creates almost a sequel to the anti-depression guide 10 issues ago. The result is a pointed, summarizing list of ways to maintain a presence in the world and active engagement with politics and hope. If you have ever read Doris before, maybe you already know this stuff, but as I see it, reading Cindy's writing is beautiful, simple, an enormous comfort and force of motivation, a reminder to actualize desires and fulfill wishes. There is less story telling than usual and more focused directions on living and loving. Right after reading it I wrote a letter and made a list of things to accomplish in the next five years. (JB)
Doris / Cindy / PO Box 29 / Athens, OH 45701

EARTH FIRST! Vol. 28, #3 / $4.50
17 x 11 – printed – 32 pgs
I sometimes feel jaded when it comes to environmental action because it seems that big business interests always win at the end of the day. I figured the best way to be environmentally positive would be by living my personal life as conscious as possible in regards to reuse, recycling and just not buying. But goddamnit, that's not enough! Those fuckers out there are going to clear-cut, mine and drill until this planet finally succumbs to the slow murder the human race has been committing over the last couple of centuries. But there are people trying to do something about it, sometimes by radical means, and this



renowned organization has been at the center of the struggle for years. As always, this journal is packed full of articles covering various protests, movements and environmental issues, as well as book reviews, poetry, and announcements of upcoming events. The journal occasionally steps outside of strictly ecological matters, such as the article on the Lakota Freedom Delegation, who are attempting to withdraw from all past treaties signed with the US government. This magazine is guaranteed to motivate a cynical person back to action. Check it out. (BG)
PO Box 3023 / Tucson, AZ 85702
www.earthfirstjournal.org

GULLIBLE #28 / $1 PPD
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
The author of this zine, like myself, is a copyeditor, so reading through *Gullible* #28 was a breeze. I was not confronted with repetitious use of adjectives, erroneous subject verb agreement, or misplaced commas—a nice change from the garbage I had to read all day at school in the journalism lab. Besides her ability to construct a grammatically correct sentence, CT Terry is a really wonderful writer. Her short stories are vivid, funny, thoughtful, and take you to the place of the narrator. Her stories are told through the voice of a first person narrator during their adolescence, but her tone and sense of humor remain consistent throughout each piece. The only weak part of this zine was the cartoons. Although some stood on their own, it was unclear whether certain cartoons were supplementary to the stories or unrelated. But the overall look of this zine was really clean and easy to approach, but still maintained cut and paste aesthetic. Although this zine is already good, it only promises to get better. (MJ)
CT Terry / 807 Bergen-2R / Brooklyn, NY 11238

HERPES #3 / $2, no trades
8.5 x 11 – copied – 56 pgs
This is the third and final installment of *Herpes*. The author, Tall Rob, premeditated the magazine's entire existence. He cleverly planned three installments: simplex, type two, and remission. He claims that he has accomplished exactly what he wanted with the mag—three issues over the span of a year with a similar aesthetic and coverage. I'd say that *Herpes* biggest strength is it's insightful and thorough snapshot of the American hardcore scene circa now. I can't think of many other current zines that offer similarly in depth coverage—pay attention to the show and records reviews in *Herpes* because they are very well written and offer a lot of info. In this issue Rob also treats us to conversations (no email bull-

shit) with fellow Columbus dwellers Absolute Magnitude, Chicago slop-hardcore faves the Repos, and Winnepeg's (self-proclaimed) moronic jokesters Born Bad. Rob also offers a reprinted Absolution interview, obsessive thoughts about Mary Tyler Moore, a slew of music, zine, and show reviews, and an article extolling the musical prowess and influence of Dag Nasty's *Can I Say* record. I like *Herpes* a lot, mostly as a result of Rob's often opinionated, informed, and sarcastically dry-humored writing. I'm kind of glad that he purposely pulled the plug on *Herpes*, but I'd like to see him continue to contribute to the sadly declining world of fanzines. (CI).
1131 N. High St / Apt. 301 / Columbus, OH 43201
get.herpes.now@gmail.com

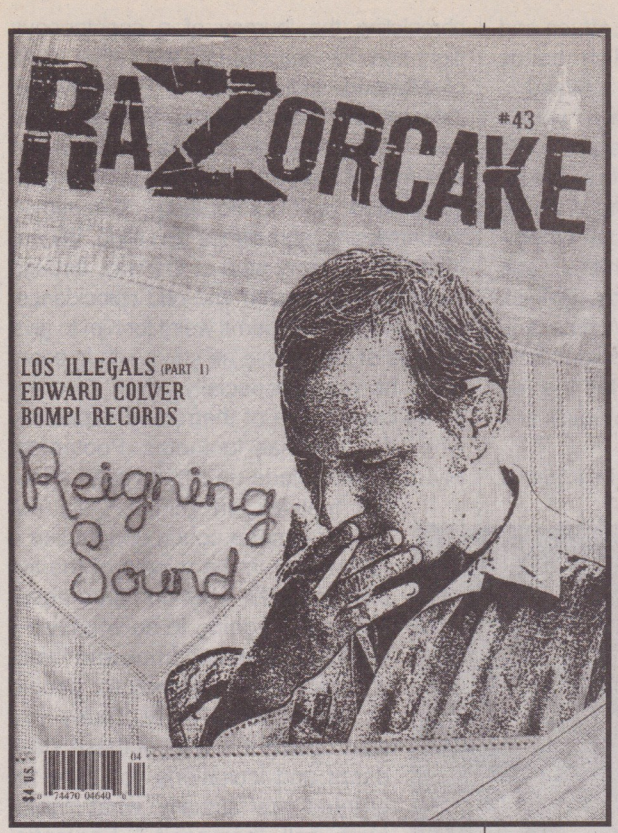
LOSERDOM #17 / 3 pounds
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 112 pgs
Can you handle it? This issue of Loserdom is enormous, but mostly in comic form which makes it digestible. The start of it tells the tale of a punk bike race "Le Tour Punk 2" which seems almost believable, though sort of confusing as it seems to make fun of people working together for a common goal. But there is also a comic about time travel with a bicycle that sounds strangely familiar to a story they made into a movie starring that babe Michael J. Fox. But in case you thought it was all tom-foolery, hey, there's also a history lesson about the Spanish Revolution in the form of a tour of Barcelona with modern contexts provided. Also included is a detailed interview with Deko Dachau which covers a history of Irish punk via discussion of his bands Paranoid Visions and Striknien DC—it reads like a lot of other histories, where you might get a better understanding of it if you just listened to the bands first. Luckily we can do that now thanks to the Internet! (JB)
loserdomzine@gmail.com
www.loserdomzine.com

PROFANE EXISTENCE #56 / $5
8.5 x 10.75 – printed – 82 pages
I always enjoy picking up a new issue of *PE*. This issue has interviews with Blackout, Hevn, Murder Disco X, (the widely underappreciated…) Protestant, Atomgevitter, artist Amy Toxic, a few exchanged words with *Slug & Lettuce* and some short talks with Swedish bands Wolfbrigade, Meanwhile, Avskum. Columns, reviews and some vegan recipes grace the pages. There are some great articles on repairing your credit, America's prison system and the Western image of how a woman should proportioned. The compilation CD with this issue has jams from After the Bombs, Ballast, Hip Cops, Imperial Leather, Victims and XBrainiaX amongst others. I couldn't help but notice that the folks at *PE* left the red and black anarchist star off the cover and got a bigger barcode!? (SM)
P.O. Box 18051 / Minneapolis, MN 55418

PROOF I EXIST #9 / $1
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 48 pages
A personal-style zine from Chicago consisting of letters the editor has written to people, which I will admit is a clever concept for a zine. The art of letter writing is a dying art, so it's a cool idea for a zine. Includes some pictures, some stuff on music, and so forth. Cool cut and paste layout. (NM)
PO BOX 470507 / Chicago, IL 60647-0507

PUDD'N HEAD #4 / $4ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 132 pgs
Quite literally a series of journal entries chronicling the journey of a spontaneous flight from Minneapolis into the nether world of Missouri, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Florida, Georgia,…and so on. It begins as an escape and turns into a journey of Starbuck employee union organizing, and self exploration. Sometimes embarrassing, sometimes revealing, we are taken along every step of the way, through every wrong decision and odd coincidence. Here and there it seems weird for him to give reviews of the people he stays with in every place he goes, especially when I sometimes know some of them, and especially when the zine has footnotes. Footnotes! My mind was made up when I read about his feelings on parties: "It's not proper to set a couch upright like a totem pole in the middle of the living room. But what do I care about proper? I'm going to do whatever I want, because I'm drunk and I'm at a party. I think it's good for people to learn how to party, cause you start seeing that a lot of these standards and limitations you take for granted are actually what zoologists call 'horseshit.'" Fantastic. (JB)
Mike Pudd'nhead / PO Box 7458 / Mpls, MN 55407

RAZORCAKE #43 / $4
8 x 10.5 – printed – 112 pgs
I would hope by now everyone has had a chance to read or at least quickly peruse an issue of this fine publication. In this, the 43rd issue of *Razorcake*, Jimmy Alvarado continues his digging up of all things early LA punk with a super in-depth discussion with Willie Herron and Xiuy Velo of East LA pioneers Los Illegals. Discussed are Herron's introductions to punk through his involvement in the subversive Chicano guerrilla art group Asco. As always Mr. Alvarado does an amazing job of keeping things interesting. Also included are equally in-depth interviews with Mr. Greg Cartwright of the Reigning Sound and the man that showed the world just what the early LA punk scene looked like, Ed Colver. Sandwiched in between all this awesomeness are the usual columns, reviews, comics, and other bells and whistles. A quality publication and hopefully we'll get to see *Razorcake* stick around just as long as *MRR* has. (JU)
PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042
www.razorcake.org



SHORT FAST & LOUD #19 /
7 x 7 – printed – 88 pgs
Over two-thirds of this zine are reviews & ads. Since most of 'em (and there are a lot) are from smaller labels and projects, and tend towards thrash, I am happy enough. The reviews do range in quality, barely anybody gets a bad review, and only a couple are mean/snotty. The columns are fewer. "Gimme Five," a frequently rad section, is disappointing—"they can't all be gems" as Krusty says. Sayyadina and Violent Headache are interviewed in some detail. This issue comes with an Insect Warfare/F.I.D. split 7" (reviewed with the records a few pages back.) This ain't their best issue, but if you're lookin' for thrash coverage, it is eminently satisfying. (JM)
225 Lincoln Ave. / Cotati, CA 94931 / sixweeksrecords.com

SKYSCRAPER #27 / $5
8.5 x 11 – printed – 104 Pages
I haven't seen a copy of *Skyscraper* in ages and it was pretty suprising to see how slick it is looking now. It could be that I am making this up but this used to have some hardcore and punk in it, but you'd be hard pressed to find any here. It's all indie-rock essentially, what with the *Dillinger Escape Plan* and *Tusk* interviews being the most interesting things to me in here. Less interesting would be the rest: *Titan, Abe Vigoda, Dan Deacon, Stephen Malkmus And The Jicks*, tons of reviews, pictures, and ads. It's like *The Big Takeover* except not glossy. (NM)
www.skyscrapermagazine. com

SOMETHING TO SAY #1 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pgs
The writer of *Something To Say* seems to be pretty passionate about the things he likes. After reading this issue I got the sense that he is very fond of his country's (Belgium) punk scene. He also seems stoked on skateboarding and his band, Sunpower. He talks about the positive aspects of his brief foray into Krisha consciousness and also his experiences with the late Mikey Offender (RIP). He printed a guest column that weighs the pros and cons of downloaded music charts in regards to punk, which kind of bored me because I don't think punk belongs on any of those big, fancy, ad-overloaded, spyware infected sites anyway. I'm not anti-MP3 but those charted download sites are not punk... Anyway, the rest of the zine is rounded out with a Sunpower tour diary that was written by a friend, a Zyklome A interview where the dude in the band justifies beating up his ex-girlfriend (sorry dude, you sound like a real big douche), and a roundtable discussion with a bunch of older skate punks that keep it pos, which is nice. Overall the zine was a mixed bag. It'd be OK for a bathroom read but isn't anything I'd seek out. I'm sure this would strike interest with any Belgium hardcores out there though. (CI)
no contact

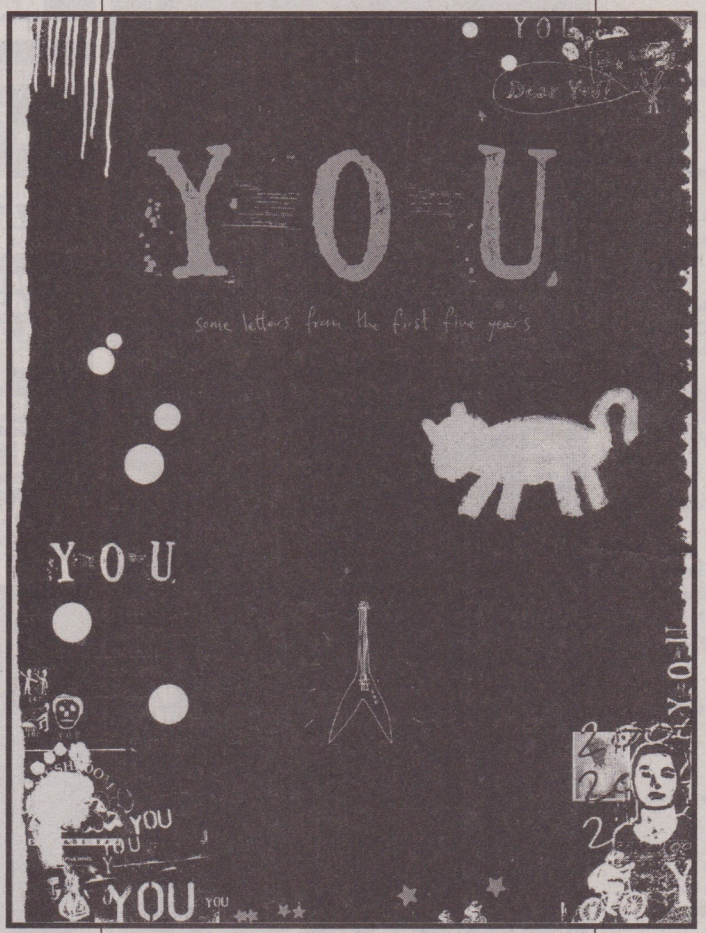
THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #87 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 48 pgs
It's a pleasure to see reliable zines such as *TTWN* sticking it out over the years. This issue features good interviews with Propagandhi and the Dollyrots, as well as some enjoyable show reviews that read more like interesting experiences rather than just simple write-ups of the bands performing. Reading a zine from Missouri really makes me appreciate living in San Francisco, where I have so much to choose from that I end up pretty spoiled. This was a reminder to me of people who have to make greater efforts to sustain their local scene and to support touring bands who are generous enough to play places other than the major metropolitan centers. With this in mind, *TTWN* focuses a lot on the Columbia, MO scene, and admittedly, I've never heard of the majority of bands covered in the live music reviews. Regardless, other items such as rare movie reviews, an essay about Karl Rove admitting the war in Iraq is about oil, and a story about a musician getting his music stolen on myspace make this appealing enough for anyone to enjoy. (BG)
PO Box 1444 / Columbia, MO 65205-1444
http://thetroublewithnormal.tripod.net

TURNING THE TIDE #21 / free?
11.5 x 8.5 – printed – 8 pgs
A political publication from Anti-Racist Action. printed in tabloid format. In this issue: Black Riders Liberation Party, crime & punishment, Russian anti-fascist solidarity, the 1912 Lawrence Textile Strike, Obama's candidacy, and more. (CH)
Anti-Racist Action Publishers / PO Box 1055 / Culver City, CA 90232

URINAL GUM #3 / $2
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 44 pgs
This issue of *Urinal Gum*, much like the issue that I reviewed last month, is a nice semi-short and entertaining read. I finished this in about two craps. Also much like the previous issue this is mostly made up of opinion pieces on a various array of topics: there is a restaurant review, one book review, one record review, and one poem. There's also a piece about welfare moms and a letter to the makers of Guitar Hero amongst many other things. All in all, I find reading this zine to be time well spent. (JU)
PO Box 1243 / Eugene, OR 97440
www.urinalgum.com

WHALERIBBED #1 / $1
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 20 pgs
At first sight, *Whaleribbed* appeared to be another in a long line of "diary comics" that seem to be sprouting up with increased regularity. I have to confess that there are few things more tedious than reading a daily summation of what the writer's day was like (does anyone really care what you had for breakfast?), and poorly illustrated to boot. But *Whaleribbed* uses the format to actually explore concepts and ideas that are engaging and interesting. While there is some of the daily life depicted here, it mostly serves as the backdrop to the confront issues involving heteronormativity, gender roles, masculinity, and power dynamics within personal relationships. Using the comic format to discuss these topics is not only a welcome break from the mediocrity usually presented, but also makes a more dynamic way of exploring issues that many folks tend to turn away from. It can be a bit esoteric but interesting all the way through. (CR)
3017 20th St. #1 / San Francisco, CA 94110
fairisfair@gmail.com

XPLOITED ZINE #2 / $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 52 pgs
I enjoyed reading this from cover to cover, although, admittedly there's really nothing "punk" about the zine at all. This issue's theme is centered on public bathrooms, and a wide array of contributors offer up short, quirky and humorous anecdotes ranging from casual observations of bathroom behavior to sexual encounters that take place in the communal toilet. We've all had our weird moments in public lavatories, so what a great idea to dedicate an issue to this phenomena. I mean, did you ever wonder just who (or why for that matter) writes some of the stupid shit you see on the wall? And what's up with those bathroom attendants you see once in awhile that you're supposed to tip or something? Have you ever tried one of those nasty coin-operated "self-cleaning" toilets? All this and more is contained herein. Some interesting photos, reviews (of SF and London stalls), and info on public restroom resources complete the issue. The first issue of *Xploited* focused on public transportation and the next one is seeking stories on homelessness. I dig the themes and I recommend this to anyone who likes to take the occasional respite from music and politics. (BG)
www.XploitedProductions.com



YOU: SOME LETTERS FROM THE FIRST FIVE YEARS / $30 ppd
7 x 9.5 – printed book – 160 pgs
This is such a beautiful compilation. This book chronicles hundreds of letters and copies them into lovely little layouts. Included with the book were six or seven individually stamped, printed, and stapled shut packages containing letters written to *"You"*, that I dare not open—unless I get an actual staple remover, so as not to ruin the darling little jackets. It's collectible and cute. Made in Australia, this long running zine will now see the light of day as a hip coffee table book, or possibly a volume to grace the loo-brary. Well, that does depend on the book's distribution I guess. I felt quite special getting my copy without having to pay the cover price. It is indeed worth the price for what has apparently gone it to its achievement, and will make a wonderful gift when I am through admiring its charm. (DS)
Sticky / Breakdown Press / PO Box 310 Flinders Lane / Melbourne / Victoria / 8009 / Australia
info@breakdownpress.org

ZINE WORLD #25.5 / $4 US, $6 Canada, $7 rest of the world
Cash, stamps, or money order
8.5 x 11 – copied – 12 pgs
This solid review zine covers a wide variety of zines that represent many diverse perspectives. No matter what your taste, you can find the zine for you. The reviews are refreshingly clear and well-written, which definitely aid in selecting the zine of your choice. There were quite a few zines already reviewed in *MRR*, so expect to see some familiar titles, but not necessarily the same opinions on the zine's content. I recommend reading this zine with a highlighter to mark which zines you want, it enhances the experience. Now that *Factsheet 5* is defunct, it's nice that review zines like *Xerography Debt* and *Zine World* are picking up where *F5* left off. (MJ)
PO Box 330156 / Murfreesboro TN 37133-0156
www.undergroundpress.org

924 GILMAN

MAY

Friday 02 • DOORS OPEN @ 7:30
Antagony • Red Fall • Destroy The Colossus
Fallujah

Saturday 03 $7
Judas • In Disgust •Witchburner • Arctic Choke

Sunday 04 $7 • 5PM SHOW
Saros • Thrones (WA)
Subarachnoid Space (OR) • 100 Suns

Friday 09 $7 • DOORS OPEN @ 7:30
Judgement Day (Record Release) • Birdmonster
Ninja Academy (L.A.) • Desa • Build Us Airplanes

Saturday 10 $7 • ($5 w/ non-punk costume)
PUNK PROM w/ Knights Of The New Crusade
People Eaters • The Martyr Index (CANADA) • Break

Friday 16 $7 • DOORS OPEN @ 7:30
Sabertooth Zombie • Murder Practice • Seize The Night
Skin Like Iron • Grace Alley • Crucified

Saturday 17 $7
ROCK POSTER ART SHOW w/ bands
XBXRX • Triclops • Surrender
POSTER ARTISTS:
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David d'Andrea • D. King Gallery

Sunday 18 $7 • 5PM SHOW
Sky Saxon (Seeds) • Kreamy Lectric Summer
Powell St. John and The Aliens

Friday 23 $7
The Forgotten • Harrington Saints • Violation
Orange • War Dogs

Saturday 24 • Aphotic Noise Fest
Xome • Blow Up Nihilist • Cerebral Foil
Bleachy Bleachy Bleach • Under Contro

lFriday 30 $7
Kakistocracy (NC) • One In The Chamber Outraged •
You Die • Threat To The System

Saturday 31 • DOORS OPEN @ 7:30
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Virulent Death • Meltdown

JUNE

Friday 06
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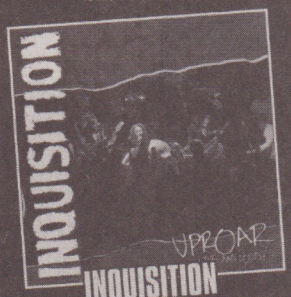

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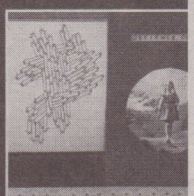

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"Great Dep." LP/CD
"Share..." LP

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"Decline of the Southern Gentleman" LP/CD

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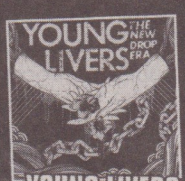

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I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE to no man to no god. / Time to stand up / Believe in ourselves / We don't need anyone's help!

THIS IS THE END of this issue of *MRR*. If you were disappointed or if you felt that something wasn't included in this issue, do it yourself and send it in to us to make sure it gets covered. This zine is what you make it. Got ideas for features, stories, criticisms, pitch it to us, we don't bite.

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